

# Newsweek®



## TIME BOMB

10.04.2015

**The experts said the Ebola scare was over.**

**But 60 days ago, in a Liberian ghetto called Red Light, a gangster was killed.**

**The virus was in his blood.**





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TANYA BINDRA

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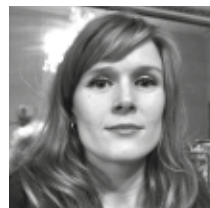
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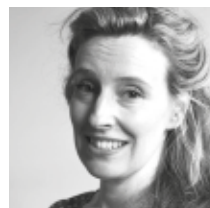
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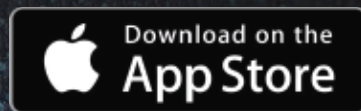
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# BIG SHOTS

GERMANY

## Lamentation

Reporters listen to Ulrich Wessel, principal of the school from which 16 pupils and two teachers were killed in the Germanwings crash. He tells them, "I was asked yesterday how many students there are at the school here in Haltern, and I said 1,283 without thinking. Then had to say afterward, unfortunately, 16 fewer. That's just terrible."



MARTIN MEISSNER



# BIG SHOTS

SOUTH KOREA

## The sea parts

Once a year, the phased alignment of the Earth, Moon and Sun creates such an extremely low tide around the islands of Jindo and Modo that an otherwise submerged causeway is disclosed by the waters. Thousands of people walk across the seabed during one hour that the way remains open.



ED JONES















## BIG SHOTS

**SYRIA**

### **Tank Girl**

A woman soldier in Syria's Republican Guard on duty during clashes with rebels in Jobar, a suburb of Damascus. The 800-strong female battalion was created almost a year ago to bolster the forces of President Bashar al-Assad.



JOSEPH EID



# BIG SHOTS

## SOMALIA

### Floodlight

Boys play football at evening in Mogadishu. Despite militant group al-Shabaab having banned the sport in areas it controls, football remains wildly popular in Somalia.

Earlier this month, its governing body FIFA donated 860 footballs to help the boys of Somalia to carry on playing the beautiful game.



CARL DE SOUZA











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# P A G E O N E

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## **RUSSIA LAUNCHES NEXT DEADLY PHASE OF SOFT WAR ON UKRAINE**

Moscow's spy agencies have started a campaign of bomb attacks to create panic and instability across the country

**PUSHING HIS** baby daughter in a pram in front of him, 37-year-old Dmitriy Komyakov paused as marchers ahead adjusted their positions around a huge Ukrainian flag. It was a bright day in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city. A good day for the hundreds in attendance to celebrate one year since Euromaidan demonstrators ousted president Viktor Yanukovich.

Just as the march moved off again, an explosion ripped into the crowd. Komyakov was close enough to feel the heat of the blast wave. As bloodied victims slumped to the floor, he searched for his wife and 12-year-old daughter among the panicked crowd. "I could see pieces of metal flying and people starting to fall," he

says. "First I checked the baby to see if she was injured, then myself, looked around and that's when my wife and daughter ran to me." Miraculously, the whole family had escaped unscathed. But four people, including two teenage boys, were killed in that blast and another nine seriously wounded.

Ukraine's state security service, the SBU, says Russia has entered into a new phase of its campaign to destabilise Ukraine, with the 22 February attack in Kharkiv just one of a series of bombings orchestrated by Russian spy services, the FSB and the GRU. "It starts with the FSB's security centres 16 and 18, operating out of Skolkovo, Russia," says Vitaliy Naida, head of the SBU department responsible for intercepting online traffic. "These centres are in charge of information warfare. They send out propaganda, false information via social media. Re-captioned images from Syria,

**ONGOING CONFLICT:** Ukrainian police at the explosion site in Kharkiv, where two have been killed in a blast during a march to mark the one year anniversary of the ouster of president Viktor Yanukovich

"I could see pieces of metal flying and people starting to fall. First I checked the baby, then myself."

BY  
**MAXIM TUCKER**  
@MaxRTucker







war crimes from Serbia – they’re used to radicalising and then recruiting Ukrainians.”

He takes a suspected three-man terror cell from Dnipropetrovsk, who are currently on trial, as an example and goes through the evidence, including photographs and video of weapons with Russian serial numbers and intercepted communications.

“They were recruited by the FSB,” Naida says. “Instructions were initially given in private messages on Vkontakte [a Russian social network]. When they were detained and arrested, in their houses we found explosives, grenades, means of communications and printed messages – where to set explosives, where they should be placed to create panic.” Naida’s task is huge. His unit monitors roughly 600 “anti-Ukrainian” social network groups with hundreds of thousands of members. So far it has intercepted communications between 29 prolific group administrators and individuals using accounts linked to the Russian security services.

A cursory internet search reveals separatist groups are no longer just Ukraine’s problem. This year Armenia, the Baltic countries, Moldova and Poland have suddenly acquired new “People’s Republic” pages on social media, some overtly pro-Russian, others simply stoking ethnic tensions between majority and minority populations in the same city or country – be they Russians and Latvians, or Poles and Lithuanians.

In the meantime, not a week goes by in Ukraine without some form of terror-related incident – from a hoax bomb threat shutting down Lviv airport in western Ukraine, to a series

“They send out propaganda, false information via social media. Re-captioned images from Syria, war crimes from Serbia.”

of blasts targeting pro-Ukrainian political groups in Odessa, southern Ukraine. Infrastructure such as railways and financial institutions are hit, and in cases like Kharkiv, ordinary Ukrainians too.

The Kharkiv bombers, a group known as the “Kharkiv Partisans”, say they were aiming to hit soldiers and political figures at the front of the march. In the end a parked truck bore the brunt of the blast, preventing dozens more casualties. Four of the “partisans” were captured immediately after the bombing, en route to destroy a pro-Ukrainian volunteers’ club with a rocket launcher.

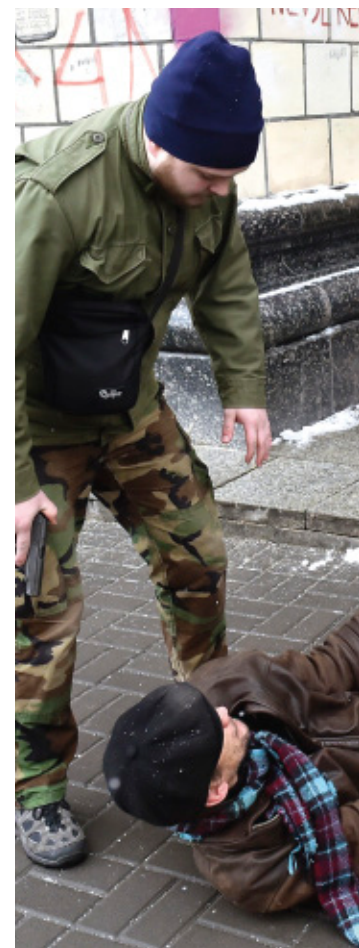
In a video of one Partisan’s interrogation given to *Newsweek* by the SBU, an exhausted-sounding man whose face has been pixelated to obscure his identity ahead of trial, but possibly sporting a black eye, explains the attack. “I set the mine at a special angle to maximise impact for the front corners, where there were, as I know, volunteer battalion members and representatives of nationalist organisations.”

The man tells his interrogator that he met a Russian special forces operative while in Belgorod in November, who asked him to video and photograph Ukrainian troop movements. In February, he says he was instructed to collect a MON-100 anti-personnel mine from a hide in Kharkiv, which he says he planted and detonated on the march route in return for \$10,000 – to be collected in Russia. The confession sounds forced and somewhat rehearsed. In a war where both sides have been caught out disseminating outrageous propaganda, it’s difficult to trust the SBU.

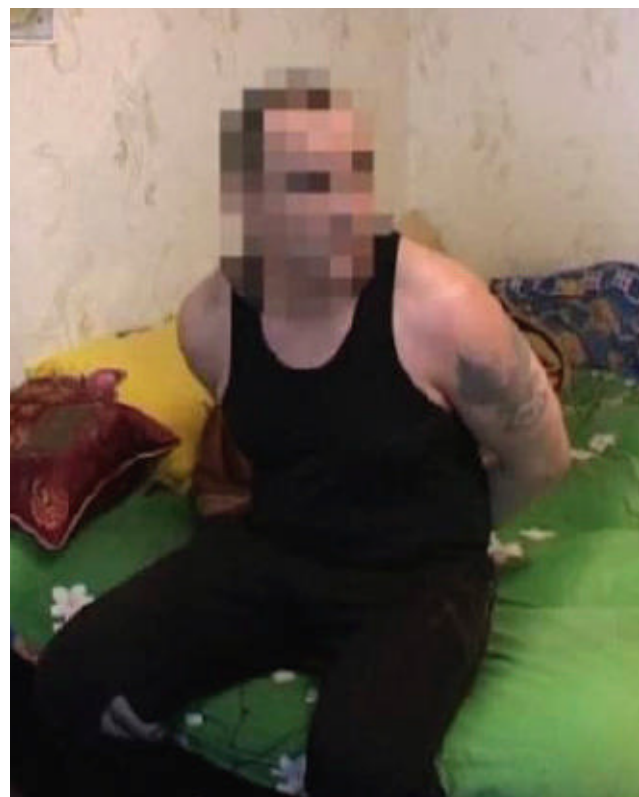
Yet Russian claims that the bombing campaign is part of a Ukrainian effort to discredit them are outlandish. Given the dire consequences for Ukraine in terms of damage to economy, potential investment and infrastructure, the idea that it is bombing itself hardly seems credible.

An alternative theory is that Russia is using “partisans” as an extension of its hybrid war in Ukraine. There is already an overwhelming amount of independently verified photo, video and anecdotal evidence to demonstrate Russian involvement in the conflict in Ukraine, although Russian officials continue to deny aiding the separatists or sponsoring terrorism. “The goal is to destabilise the situation, to create panic, to damage the economy,” the SBU’s Naida says.

“They target Kiev, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Odessa, and all along the potential land corridor [between Russia and] Crimea – Mariupol, Kherson and Mykolaiv. The separatists need these cities. They know there is no chance for them to survive without the land corridor.”



**CRIMINAL ACTIVITY:** Two men were arrested in Kiev in February, suspected of plotting separatist activities, above. In Odessa, pro-Russian paraphernalia and ammunition were found when police detained another terror suspect, right



Whatever the motive behind the attacks, it's clear they are set to continue. On 25 March a railway line was blown up in Dnipropetrovsk. A 17 March SBU raid which hauled in five terror suspects in Odessa failed to prevent another bombing on 22 March. For families like the Komyakovs, the intensifying terror campaign is a second, crushing blow. They thought they had escaped the war when they fled their home in Stakhanov, a city in Luhansk region, devastated by shelling and now controlled by pro-Russian groups.

Dmitriy Komyakov had banned his 12-year-old daughter from attending any pro-Ukrainian meetings while in Stakhanov, knowing it would be dangerous. In Kharkiv, he thought it would be different. "My eldest daughter is 12, she's very pro-Ukrainian, as all young people nowadays are," sighs Komyakov. "She was always interested in these marches and meetings, always asking if she can go. But I never let her. Because in war, anything can happen."

Komyakov is utterly despondent. His family have already lost their home, and for months they have struggled to make ends meet as they tried to settle into a new life in Kharkiv. Now he is wondering whether to uproot them again. "It's horrible but I have a feeling . . . and people here say that soon it will be the same in Kharkiv as in the city we came from. That's a terrifying thought."





## CHINA BUILDS CURRENCY TO LEAD WORLD DOMINATION PLAN

The world's most populous nation has a vision: to return from Pax Americana to Pax Sinica (Chinese peace)

**THE QUESTION** is straightforward enough, even if it does sound a bit abstract and academic: what does China want its currency – the yuan – to be?

The answer is much more important, both to the state of global financial markets and to the way the international financial and trade system now functions, than most people realise. A currency is, at root, a medium of exchange, but currencies are – or can be – so much more than that. The US dollar's post-Second World War role as a so-called “reserve currency” – the default medium of exchange for virtually all international trade, and the place where nearly everyone runs in a crisis – had everything to do with the US's role in the world. Not only was its economy the world's largest and its financial markets the deepest and most liquid, but it enforced (first in the “free” world during the Cold War, then globally ever since) a Washington-driven “Pax Americana”, a system of institutions and rules that try to guide international commerce. The fact that the US has had the world's most powerful military has underpinned that system since 1945. The dollar's place in the world has been both the symbol and the result of that geopolitical reality.

That is now slowly changing. China is on the road to superpower status; its economy will sooner or later be the world's largest, and its military (though still dwarfed by the US's) is growing

rapidly, with the annual rate of increase in how much Beijing spends on defence now accelerating. China's leadership, at minimum, sees itself as ascending to equal status with the US in a couple of decades. And some analysts, like former US Department of Defense official Michael Pillsbury, believe Beijing's ambition is to be number one – to supplant Washington as the world's dominant superpower.

In either case, China's rise requires that the role of its currency become more internationally prominent. Even though Beijing still applies capital controls – individuals are not allowed to export more than the equivalent of \$50,000 per year (though the country's economic elites ignore that with abandon) – the yuan is becoming more prominent globally. A decade ago, for example, China's currency was very lightly traded abroad. Now it is one of the five most heavily traded in the world – a position that will only increase as Beijing continues to open up its capital account, which central bank chief Zhou Xiaochuan pledged it would in a 22 March speech.

It's also likely that this September the currency will be included in the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) basket of currencies that make up its so-called Special Drawing Rights (SDR) – an alternate form of foreign exchange reserves, that Beijing has argued should play a more significant

**EASTWARD SHIFT:** Washington is starting to feel increasingly isolated as more key allies agree to join China's answer to the World Bank, including Britain and South Korea

BY  
**BILL POWELL**  
[@billasia2000](#)

role in the reserve holdings of emerging economies in particular.

SDRs, to be sure, represent an obscure corner of the international financial system, but Beijing's ambition to have the yuan represented in them is telling. It's a way for Beijing to make the world less dollar-centric within the institutions set up in the Pax Americana world (in this case the IMF), and it coincides with efforts to create new institutions in, what Beijing hopes, will be a more Sinocentric world.

Most prominent among them is the so-called Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which Beijing sees as a way to fund the development of ports and railroads and power generation systems across the developing world. And it is the AIIB that Washington and Beijing are having a very public clash about – one that Beijing now appears to be winning.

The Obama administration has leaned heavily on traditional allies in Europe and Asia to not join the AIIB, partly because (it says publicly) it will simply replicate what the (Japan-dominated, Manila-based) Asian Development Bank already does. And, the administration argues privately, the AIIB will be a way in which Beijing funnels big contracts back to state-owned enterprises at home.

for an agreement from Beijing that China would not have veto power over what contracts are awarded, and which bidders are allowed to participate. Beijing subsequently denied that it had given up veto power, and sources now say that the issue is still “being negotiated”, according to one Western diplomat in Beijing. In any case, the entire episode was a clear boost for Beijing, and for the role it wants the yuan to play internationally in the future.

Yet the path to prominence – to a reserve currency worthy of a superpower – is not unobstructed. “If, as we assume, China's long-term goal is for the [yuan] to become a global unit of account, that can only happen if the currency is perceived as strong and stable,” says Louis-Vincent Gave, an economist at Gavekal Dragonomics Global Research.

And that is China's problem. For a decade, Beijing has allowed its currency to slowly appreciate in value against the dollar. (The yuan does not trade freely; the People's Bank of China (PBOC) intervenes to keep it pegged within a trading range against the dollar.) In a world of 10% annual economic growth at home and relative currency stability abroad among its trading partners, slow but steady currency appreciation was something Beijing could afford.

Now, however, it's a different world. In a disinflationary if not deflationary global economic environment, some of China's major trading partners (and industrial competitors) are in the process of devaluing their currencies sharply; Europe and Japan most prominently, but South Korea and Taiwan as well. China's growth, meanwhile, is slowing sharply and may dip below the 7% mark the government has stated is its goal for 2015.

Big Chinese exporters, therefore, are putting increasing pressure on the government to jump into the devaluation game, lest overall economic growth slow even further. To a point, the PBOC has agreed. Today the yuan trades at 6.22 versus the dollar, compared to 6.11 six months ago. The foreign financial press is full of speculation that a significant devaluation is coming.

If one isn't forthcoming in 2015, that will tell the world volumes about Beijing's long-run ambitions. If Xi Jinping and his government resist the short-run pressure from politically powerful economic interests and don't join in the world's escalating currency wars, it means China is willing to endure short-term pain in order to gain long-term prominence – and power. A strong yuan may well be a symbol of a strong China – and that, for Xi, may carry the day, even as the pressure to devalue intensifies. N

This tactic has absolutely befuddled many critics, who believe it would be far better for Western powers and their Asian allies to join the bank and help influence its direction from the inside. And indeed, four big European powers – the UK, Germany, France and Italy – have in recent weeks snubbed Washington and stated that they will be members of the new multilateral lending institution. Initial reports were that they did so in return



SASHA MORDOVETS/GETTY



## THE IMPECCABLE LOGIC BEHIND PUTIN'S 'MADMAN STRATEGY'

Western intelligence agencies say that the Russian leader is deliberately cultivating an erratic image

**MUAMMAR GADDAFI** deployed a clever strategy to make sure he was always in the minds of leaders and ordinary citizens around the world: he pretended to be unhinged to confuse and frighten his adversaries. Lately Vladimir Putin seems to have adopted a similar strategy, appearing alternately depressed, out of touch with reality, or else disappearing altogether. Call it his antic disposition.

"There's a rationale in being perceived as unpredictable," says a recently-departed Moscow ambassador, who also knew Putin in St Petersburg. "Russian state television is aiding Putin by creating an atmosphere of collective psychosis. The Russian strategy is to scare the West by portraying Putin as unpredictable. If you've got a madman in power, a country's nuclear weapons take on a completely new dimension."

Indeed, in the past couple of years, Putin has gone out of his way to keep Russia's arsenal in the

forefront of the public consciousness. According to Martin Hellman, an emeritus professor at Stanford and adjunct fellow at the Federation of American Scientists who specialises in nuclear risk, the West hasn't properly caught on to Putin's Armageddon game.

"Nuclear weapons are the card that Putin has up his sleeve, and he's using it to get the world to realise that Russia is a superpower, not just a regional power," he explains. "The Russians can turn us into ash in less than an hour." Less grandstanding with Putin is what is needed to prevent the madman game from ending in tragedy, Hellman argues.

The tactic has worked in the past. Gaddafi's nuclear development programme helped him efficiently bargain with the international community. North Korea's Kim dynasty uses the same sinister trick. In fact, a bit of perceived madness is essential to nuclear strategy.

"I call it the Madman Theory," US president Richard Nixon told his chief of staff, Bob Haldeman, in 1969. "I want the North Vietnamese to believe that I've reached the point that I might do anything to stop the [Vietnam] war." In a classified 1995 report, the US military's Strategic Command recommends that "it hurts to portray ourselves as too fully rational and cool-headed . . . That the US may become irrational

"His actions are not crazy at all. He'll do anything to stay in power, and using nuclear rhetoric is a means to that end."

BY  
**ELISABETH BRAW**  
[@elisabethbraw](https://twitter.com/elisabethbraw)





**CUNNING METHODS:** Policymakers around Europe are debating if Putin's unpredictable tactics make him a great strategist or plain mad

and vindictive if its vital interests are attacked should be part of the national persona we project to all adversaries”.

Irrational and vindictive: that sounds a whole lot like the current Vladimir Putin. It's no surprise that foreign governments and intelligence agencies are frantically trying to figure out the enigmatic leader.

Several years ago, the Pentagon's in-house thinktank made a valiant attempt, concluding that Putin suffered from Asperger's syndrome. But the CIA is the undisputed leader of the discipline. Enlisting everything from diplomats' observations and intelligence reports to evaluations of the subject's public speeches and demeanour, the agency's Centre for Analysis of Personality and Political Behaviour created dozens of personality profiles of foreign leaders.

The Agency still produces such personality assessments. CIA spokesman Todd Ebitz

explains: “Today these specialised analysts still provide policymakers with keen insights on foreign leaders, but they work in units throughout the Agency's Intelligence Directorate where they are integrated with analysts covering political, military, and economic issues.”

So how do the CIA psychologists currently assess Vladimir Putin? The Agency won't tell. But according to professor Jerrold Post, who created and for many years led the personality analysis centre, the president “sees himself as a current-day tsar who's responsible for Russian-speaking peoples. But the person who's most important to him is Putin himself, not the Russian people”.

The president's steely surface, argues Post, is a result of his being bullied as a schoolboy. “He took up martial arts so as not to be pushed around by other kids. We're seeing the same behaviour in his leadership.” Nuclear warheads,



then, are the world-leader equivalent of the bullied schoolboy's judo skills.

American billionaire investor Bill Browder is not an entirely dispassionate Putin observer, having been expelled from Russia and seen his upstanding lawyer die a mysterious death in a Russian prison. He has, however, known Putin since his early days in power. He calls Putin a "highly rational sociopath", who thought he had his domestic situation under control until President Yanukovich of Ukraine was brought down by the Maidan protesters. "Putin didn't want to end up like Yanukovich, and the only reason Putin invaded Ukraine is to create a massive distraction," he argues. Yanukovich's helplessness in the face of angry protesters mirrors that of Putin himself, who, aided only by KGB guards, defended the Dresden KGB office in the autumn of 1989 when East German democracy protesters demanded access.

Top politicians are largely cut off from contact with ordinary people. "That changes the mind of anyone," says a former friend of Putin's. "But Putin's KGB background makes him different. Other long-time leaders' psyches change the normal way, but his is changing the KGB way: everyone else is an enemy, you can only trust the KGB network. You become paranoid."

That paranoia fuels the madman game. "On one hand it's easy to say that Putin is crazy," reflects the former friend. "Because of him, now we're starting to think about nuclear war, which is completely different from two-three years ago. But on the other hand, his actions are not crazy at all. He'll do anything to stay in power, and using nuclear rhetoric is a means to that end. It's effective for him, but it's a mad strategy for Russia." That narcissist streak was visible long ago. A West German mole at the KGB office in Dresden became good friends with Putin's wife, Lyudmila, who told the mole that her husband beat her and was an incurable skirt chaser.

It is autocratic leaders such as Putin and Saddam Hussein who offer the most fertile soil for personality assessments, and when such leaders' countries steer into crises, these assessments become crucial. Jimmy Carter later pointed to the

importance of the CIA's profiles of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt, which highlighted Begin's love of details and Sadat's preference for big strokes as well as for having a "Nobel Prize complex".

But psychological assessments even of the most sophisticated kind will matter little if Putin decides to press the nuclear button. So what if it results in America retaliating by annihilating Russian cities? A narcissist leader who has a problem with empathy can't be expected to care. "The US is the world's only conventional superpower, but Putin can avoid humiliation by nuking us," argues Hellman. According to Browder, Putin is a thin-skinned man who can't back down, and Hellman suggests that the West should do as marriage therapists advise: admit one's own mistakes, thereby making it easier for one's spouse to admit his.

Another solution would be for Putin to step down, keep the \$200bn fortune Browder estimates he's amassed and enjoy a pleasant retirement. In the past, discarded leaders have been received by sympathetic countries. Idi Amin found refuge in Saudi Arabia, as did Tunisia's Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. The Shah of Iran shuttled between reluctant hosts until Mexico offered him sanctuary. Ferdinand Marcos spent his final years in Hawaii.

But which leader would volunteer to host Vladimir Putin? His tenacious efforts to remain in power may be disastrous, but the madman strategy is completely rational. N



**SECRET CLUB:**  
Vladimir Putin with  
Muammar Gaddafi  
and Kim Jong Il

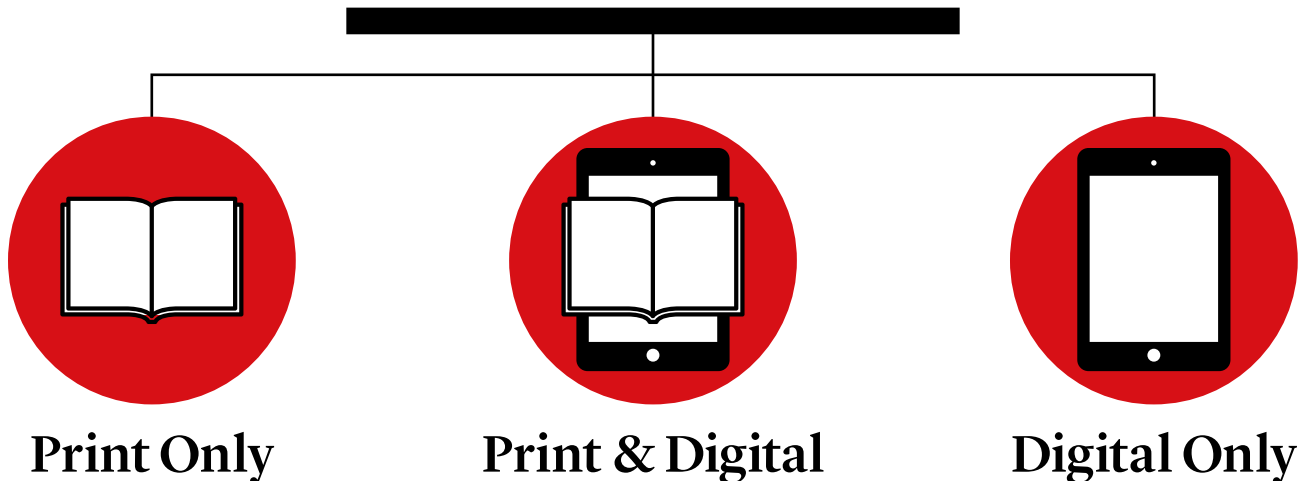
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## ONE IN FOUR APARTMENTS EMPTY IN WORLD'S TOP CITIES

The heart is being hollowed out of New York, Paris and London as absent luxury apartment owners oust local residents

IT SEEMED LIKE a good business opportunity, only it wasn't. Several years ago, Tim and Mark Hiltz, two businessmen from Canada, watched as a forest of luxury apartments sprouted up in Vancouver's posh Coal Harbour neighbourhood. Many of those rich owners, they thought, would be likely to purchase fresh flowers. The couple also anticipated a robust market designing and tending to balcony gardens. Coal Harbor Florist and Green Design soon won a contract to create and maintain a lovely 2,500 square foot garden terrace for a \$7.5m (€6.8m) residence. But the Hiltzes never met the owner, who lived in China and whose Vancouver lawyer paid the bills.

Lamenting that empty apartments don't need flowers or much else, Mark Hiltz says: "Every single day at least one person came in and commented that they would like to have a mini-garden on their balcony but they were only here two weeks a year. Looks to us like 70% of Coal Harbour apartments are empty more than 50% of the time."

After a little more than two years the business folded, the victim of a trend afflicting the most desirable cities on Earth. Dubai, Paris, London, Miami, New York, Toronto, San Francisco, Honolulu, Hong Kong, Melbourne, Shanghai and Singapore all share the same problem as Vancouver.

The problem: wealthy out-of-town and foreign owners who buy properties that they rarely, if

ever, occupy. Earth's richest are buying up grand apartments, often sight unseen, not to live in, but to store some of their wealth. Many are part-time getaways, even though renting \$4,000-a-night hotel suites would be much cheaper than laying out millions of dollars to buy a luxury flat.

In New York, Paris and some other cities about one apartment in four is empty most of the time, with a growing share not pied-à-terre studios for people with business interests in these cities, but expansive residences with views from grand balconies, maid's quarters and even ballrooms. A few even come with indoor swimming pools.

In many cities existing apartment houses are being torn down, forcing out people who lived near their work and now must commute to their jobs. Blocks of usually empty flats in the urban centre also mean that shops, like the Hiltzes' Vancouver floral store, lack enough foot traffic to stay in business.

Ultra-rich absentee owners who are largely indifferent to prices create friction for locals, even rich locals, because their purchases drive up overall housing prices in other ways, prompting political leaders in Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai, San Francisco, Vancouver, London and New York among other locales to consider ways to ease the impact.

In Vancouver, homeowners in its richest

BY  
**DAVID CAY  
JOHNSTON**  
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**URBAN BLIGHT:** Even in somewhere as opulent as Dubai, the super-rich are driving out the rest from the best properties

neighbourhoods have protested about both absentee ownership and the construction of mansions by owners whom no one has seen. Two years ago Sotheby's International Real Estate reported people living outside Canada, primarily in China, Iran and the US, bought 40% of Vancouver luxury housing.

Billionaires typically own 10 residences each, according to Knight Frank, a global estate agent and consulting firm. That means, statistically, that each of those residences is empty about 47 weeks per year unless friends or business associates are allowed to use the space.

There are far more billionaires than the 1,826 on the latest *Forbes* global list. *Forbes* primarily counts liquid wealth, such as concentrated ownership of companies that must be publicly disclosed, thus missing many more private and diversified fortunes. And for every billionaire there are many more centi-millionaires to whom a million-dollar apartment is little more than pocket change.

Some buyers use luxury housing to hide criminal proceeds, often acquiring their property through shell companies set up in jurisdictions, from Wyoming to Panama to the Cayman Islands, that make it easy to create corporations whose ownership is concealed.

Government officials and relatives who have

grown rich from their political power are also active buyers of housing they seldom use.

President Xi Jinping of China has made cracking down on corruption his primary theme. When his niece Zhang Yinnan was in her mid-20s she acquired a €6.4m Hong Kong apartment and a waterfront home in an area of €30m villas, both of which appear to be vacant, Bloomberg Business News revealed three years ago.

In Singapore, tax lawyers tell me about rich foreign clients who buy luxury apartments in the city-state, to make sure they will retain some wealth, should political change or social unrest force them to flee their home countries.

One lawyer speaks of two clients of similar wealth who owned multiple Singapore apartments, an Indian businessman in Pakistan and a Pakistani businessman in India. The businessman in Pakistan kept 40% of his wealth in Singapore, the businessman in India 20%, illustrating their assessments of the risks they faced.

When large swathes of dense urban housing are empty, it also means pavements are empty, reducing pedestrian activity that is crucial to both economic vitality and safety.

On the East Side of Manhattan near Central Park between 49th and 70th Streets, whole floors are dark every night. The Census Bureau estimates that 30% of residences in this area sit vacant at least 10 months of each year. Best-selling author Gay Talese says many of those who own apartments near his East Side townhouse are gone so often he calls them "skim-milk New Yorkers – only 2%". The same problem afflicts the Upper West Side of Manhattan and parts of Lower Manhattan.

A similar issue has arisen in some waterfront communities, like Naples, New York State in the Finger Lakes, which has the second most expensive real estate per foot of freshwater frontage in the US, as people with immense wealth erect large homes with picture window views that are seldom enjoyed.

Jane Kim, a San Francisco supervisor, says that in her downtown district "a lot of units are sold to international and out-of-town homeowners so it is great in terms of property tax revenues, but it also means we are not filling the needs of people who want to live in the city because they cannot compete" due to high prices for both owned and rented apartments "even though they make good money".

That, in turn, hurts local businesses including restaurants and markets because it reduces population density, especially on weekends. Business owners far from the urban core can feel the effects.

Building luxury apartments for absentee owners also reduces the population density needed to

LUZPHOTO



sustain urban centres. In central Brooklyn, Maria Lanauze has laid off all non-family employees of her hardware store after eight years because the largest apartment building nearby has been emptied of residents who were paying \$1,200 to \$1,500 a month in rent. The building got a property tax break and is being renovated for clients who can pay twice as much.

“They kicked out all the Hispanic people and are waiting for people who are forced out of Manhattan, but so far they haven’t come and this is really hurting our business,” she says.

Mason Gaffney, the 91-year-old and newly retired University of California-Riverside economist, whose speciality is real estate taxation, says reduced density causes multiple problems.

“When we tear down an existing building with many smaller, lower-cost units to replace it with huge luxury, we do damage to retailing, because there are fewer people in the neighbourhood” to buy goods and services, he says. Larger luxury apartments also mean more workers waste time, energy and money commuting to jobs they previously could walk to, which in turn makes it more difficult for businesses to hire from an easily accessible pool of diverse talents.

Gaffney supports taxing only land values, not buildings, as a means to encourage the highest and best development of land, especially in urban cores. But in New York City many residences pay little or no tax on their portion of the building or the land beneath, a huge subsidy for foreign owners warehousing their units.

A West 23rd Street apartment, in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighbourhood, was advertised for \$5.8m (€5.3m) before it sold the first week of March. The property tax: \$1,884 per year. That is a property tax rate of a mere three one-hundredths of 1%. The typical New York state homeowner would pay about 2% annually, 62 times that much, and some residents, including me, pay 4.5% or 141 times as much.

New York Yankees baseball star Alex Rodriguez pays even less on his \$6m (€5.5m) Upper West Side apartment with a view of the Hudson River. His property tax: \$1,200 a year. That’s a rate of just two-hundredths of 1% annually. In all 150,000

New York City apartments qualify for the 421a programme that nearly wipes out property taxes, the New York City Independent Budget Office says. Fully taxed, those apartments would pay \$1.1bn (€1bn) more annually.

In New York, state legislation has been drafted to impose a progressive tax on vacant luxury apartments worth \$5m or more. The levy would start at a half of 1% and rise to 4% on values above \$20m, which supporters hope will curtail rising prices for all residential real estate.

David Eby, a British Columbia provincial legislator, says he represents “a very empowered group of wealthy individuals who feel totally helpless” to stop absentee purchasers in Vancouver’s priciest single family neighbourhood, where houses routinely sell for several million dollars. He says they object to teardowns to build what, they consider, oversized and tasteless mansions as well as the loss of business to keep the area’s village-like commercial corridor vibrant. Many want a heavy tax levied on empty residences to discourage absentee owners.

“I am challenged,” Eby says. “How do I even talk about this issue without instigating racism against a large number of Mandarin-speaking people who come here?”

Low property taxes ease the cost of carrying an apartment. But even if an apartment is fully taxed, it will be attractive to those hiding assets from their government, business partners or an estranged spouse.

In many places luxurious apartments could be rented out for more than enough to cover the costs of taxes and insurance. That so many units sit vacant indicates that many of the richest people in the world have far more wealth and income than they can employ in profit-making activities that create jobs and increase overall wealth.

Next year, the richest 1% of humans will have more wealth than the other 99% combined. This year just 80 people have as much wealth as the poorest 3.5 billion humans, the bottom half, British charity Oxfam reported in January. Those 80 people doubled their wealth in the past five years.

The problem of absentee owners is not new. Back in 1972 critics of the Paris municipal government complained about 50,000 vacant residential units and another 35,000 apartments occupied only intermittently by out-of-towners in a city with fewer than a million housing units.

The latest estimate is that a quarter of Parisian apartments are empty most or all of the time. That trend has already enveloped Manhattan and in the absence of government intervention is likely to become the norm in other world-class cities.

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# DEATH OF A 'GRONNAH BOY'

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When a small-time gangster and heroin addict from Monrovia's ghetto was murdered over a mango his corpse tested positive for Ebola, sparking fears of a fresh outbreak in Liberia

BY CLAIR MACDOUGALL  @ClairMacD

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PICTURES BY TANYA BINDRA  
FOR **Newsweek**



# On

a warm morning in February, as Liberia's deadly Ebola outbreak seemed to be waning, Ralph Norman was visiting his brother-in-law in Paynesville – a suburb east of Monrovia – when an acquaintance called for him, asking for help. A man, he said, was lying in his welding shed, bloody and near death and he didn't know what to do.

For days, Norman, a broad-shouldered middle-aged man with a boyish face, had hardly slept. He'd heard that his stepson, a troubled 21-year-old street kid named Emmett Logan, had been in a knife fight. Logan hadn't been home since and Norman – along with his other stepson, Charlie – spent days scouring the streets of Red Light, one of the city's most dangerous neighbourhoods, going from one drug den to another, searching for Logan.

Wanting to help his neighbour, Norman – an unemployed former soldier in the Liberian Army – rushed to that shed. When he creaked open the door, he saw his stepson lying on his back on the sandy floor, in a pool of blood. “He was breathing just like a fish, when you take it from the water,” Norman said.

Norman ran from the shed and went door to door, frantically trying to borrow money for a taxi. An hour later, as he was still trying, Norman received another phone call, this one from a friend in the military. “Your son is tango uniform,” he said. He spoke in military jargon, but Norman knew what he meant: Logan was dead. “They killed him over a golden plum,” Norman later

told me, using the Liberian term for a mango. And with that small, brutal murder, a nation was thrown into a panic.

## ‘ROTTING IN THE DARKNESS’

In shock, Norman watched as the police quickly cordoned off the shed. Two days later, a Red Cross burial team arrived dressed hazmat suits; a neighbour had called them, concerned that Logan may have had Ebola.

The burial team took a swab of his body and later determined he indeed had been infected. Yet because it wasn't clear what had ultimately killed him, Ebola or his wounds, the Red Cross allowed the police investigators from headquarters to take pictures of Logan's corpse, since they would be investigating a possible murder. When they were done, the burial workers placed his body in a white bag, heaved it into the back of a pickup truck and drove off to a special cemetery, where in recent months, Ebola victims have been buried to prevent the disease from spreading.

Unable to afford a taxi to the cemetery, Norman and his family weren't able to attend Logan's funeral, weren't able to weep as his body was lowered into the ground. Only the gravediggers were there to say goodbye.

Back in town, as word spread that Logan had been infected with Ebola, Norman watched as health workers frantically began searching for anyone who had come in contact with him. Their biggest worry was that Logan may have passed the virus to dozens of

young men from the surrounding slums – many of them drug addicts and small-time gangsters, who tend to distrust authority – and thus might be difficult to quarantine. Five young men, Norman learned from Logan's friends, had allegedly attacked his stepson. The man who was supposed to have wielded the knife was named Johnny. Another went by the nickname Time Bomb – an apt metaphor for the explosive potential of the case and the disease that's recently devastated large parts of West Africa.

Over the past year, Ebola has killed 10,000 people. Almost half of those have died in Liberia, including 200 health workers. The government and international donors have been desperately trying to care for the sick, while at the same time, prevent the virus from spreading. They seemed to have finally won that battle: on 5 March, doctors discharged what they described as the last known Ebola patient from a treatment center in the capital. But a new case emerged on 21 March, not long after the country re-opened borders, sparking renewed fears of contagion.

As Logan's case reveals, such fears are not unfounded. In interviews with *Newsweek*, Logan's friends and family, along with health workers, police and local gangsters recounted his last days. The story of his death and its aftermath shows how difficult it is to contain an epidemic – and solve a possible murder – in a country where distrust of authority is widespread and the lack of water, toilets and access to basic medical services help the deadly virus proliferate.

**“He was breathing just like a fish,  
when you take it from the water.  
They killed him over a golden plum.”**

## LIFE IN RED LIGHT

Logan was raised in Red Light, a poor part of Paynesville, during Liberia's bloody civil war in the 1990s. An estimated 250,000 people died in the conflict as factions, often divided along ethnic lines, vied for power. Residents of Red Light, a strategically important area during the war, named their neighbourhood after a traffic light – one of the few in the city back then.

More than 12 years have passed since the end of the war, and busy shops and market stalls now populate its crowded streets. But residents of Red Light still bear the war's emotional scars. Those who didn't fight still grew up hard and lived on the margins; they were not ex-rebels or members of pro-government militias, but they adopted many their habits: robbing and pillaging, fighting for stature and smoking crack and low-grade heroin, called Italian White. They had few opportunities to escape Red Light and many never went to high school.

Logan's mother, Rebecca, worked odd jobs, cooking and selling bowls of food on the street. His biological father was a construction worker. Neither were around much and Charlie, Emmett and their eldest brother Trokon shuffled between the homes of friends and extended family, mostly fending for themselves. By the time he was a teenager, Logan had become a "gronnah boy", a small-time gangster who spent his



## HIGH PRICE TO PAY:

Above, a taxi in Red Light, home to the drug den where Emmett Logan was knifed. Thanks to Ebola, taxi fares are so high that Logan's stepfather could not afford one to take him to hospital. Below, Logan's grave



time jacking cell phones and car batteries to pay for food, clothes and drugs.

Like most other petty criminals, Logan had multiple aliases and wore them like masks to make himself seem tough. Among them: Chance Boudreaux, the action hero played by Jean Claude Van Damme in the 1993 film *Hard Target*. Logan's life, however, bore little resemblance to the glamourised violence of a B-grade American movie. When he wasn't robbing people or getting high, Logan slept on the street, in a jail cell or in that welding shed where he bled to death.

During Logan's teenage years, after his mother had already married Norman, his biological father – an addict

– tried to intervene and help his sons. He sent his three boys to a Bible boot camp where organisers counseled drug-addicted teens, converted them and structured their life around prayers and chores. Logan was baptised, and for a few months, fell in love with preaching. But Logan, tall, wiry, and handsome, was aggressive and prone to fighting. Eventually, he and his brothers quit the program and returned to the streets. Charlie is the only one who hasn't turned back to drugs.

After he left the camp, Logan began smoking more and more Italian White with his friends. He had to steal to sustain his habit and that left him at risk of being attacked, beaten and murdered. By the time he turned 21, he had a girlfriend and a four-month-old son, but his lifestyle never changed. "He lived on the street," says Menkarweh Wonyehn, one of Logan's friends. "He was a criminal."

Wonyehn would know. Last year, the stocky 24-year-old was sleeping on the porch of his father's bar when two of his friends, Logan and Blama, crept into his room and stole his CD player. Wonyehn woke up to find it missing and went to the police, who arrested his friends. Due

to a lack of evidence and the pettiness of the crime, the authorities let his friends go and Wonyehn – who says he isn't an addict – quickly forgave them. He cared about Logan and Blama and hoped they would one day stop using drugs. He dreamt they would get clean and open a





## DEATH IN THE SLUMS:

Below, the welding shed where Emmett Logan eventually died – possibly from wounds from his fight or from Ebola. Below right: portraits of suspect criminals line the wall at the police station nearest the shed

welding business together, though none had any sort of training. Wonyehn saw what was good in Logan.

In fact, Logan likely contracted Ebola through an act of kindness. In January, roughly two weeks before he died, friends say Logan was walking through Red Light when he saw a man and a woman walking near a swampy patch near the road. The man collapsed and Logan rushed over. He picked him up and carried him to a taxi, and the woman paid for the ride back to his house across town. Shortly thereafter, doctors say, the man died of Ebola-related complications. Logan didn't know that, or that he had contracted the disease himself.

### 'HE WANTED TO KILL HIM'

Several days later, Logan was in a part of Red Light known as Sugar Hill, hanging out in two small tents, controlled by a local drug dealer named Spoiler. A large, formidable woman in her late thirties, Spoiler once fought for the rebels. When the police would try and raid her yard, she sometimes confronted them topless or naked to scare them away.

One of the most popular drug spots in Red Light, Spoiler's den was where young, sinewy men hung out with girls with fake eyelashes. Most were gangsters, hustlers, prostitutes and addicts. Many named themselves after rap stars – Queen Latifah, Nicki Minaj, Rick Ross and DMX. Outside the tents, potato greens and maize sprouted in a nearby garden. Inside, Spoiler's customers cooked heroin on chewing gum wrappers, then used makeshift pipes made from foil to inhale the smoke, their eyes rolling back into their heads the moment they exhaled.

Those who saw the fight between Logan and Johnny say it grew out of the latter's good fortune. Time Bomb had fallen into some money, about \$1,000,



and had given a few hundred to Johnny. Their unexpected and temporary wealth was a source of envy, particularly for Logan. He saw Johnny eating a mango and began chiding him, calling it "rotten" and teasing him for burning through his cash so quickly. The argument escalated and before long, Johnny and Logan were trading blows as the rest of the men and women in Spoiler's yard watched.

Logan was taller and stronger than Johnny and a far better fighter. He got the best of him as they scrapped in the soft dirt. After several minutes, Johnny seemed to concede and the two men went their separate ways. But minutes later, Logan again attacked Johnny, this time with a razor blade, slicing the smaller man's ear. As Johnny clutched his ear in pain, several of his friends, allegedly including Time Bomb, grabbed Logan, disarmed him and held him down. A few onlookers told Johnny

to take Logan to the police station, but he refused. Instead, he tried to stab Logan with an old kitchen knife but the blade was too dull and bounced off Logan's stomach. A friend handed him two razor blades and Johnny sliced them across Logan's face. Then he used the razors to slash his spine.

As blood gushed from Logan's wounds, his attackers fled. A bystander put ground up Christmas leaves on his wounds, a local remedy, to help them heal. The next day, as the wounds festered, Logan's friends rushed him to a nearby clinic, where a nurse attended to him. He was badly maimed and they suggested he go to a hospital, but he couldn't afford it. One of the gashes on his back was deep, almost down to the bone near his spinal chord. And the nurse said a small mistake in sewing him up could have left him paralyzed. Logan never told his family what had happened; perhaps he was



**“Each ghetto is a time bomb. They know how to use weapons, they know how to use the guns.”**



too ashamed. His friends, including Blama and Wonyehn, brought him food and water as he lay in the shed. As the days passed and his condition worsened. Blama, too, soon became ill with Ebola-like symptoms and his sister eventually took him to the clinic, leaving Logan alone in the shed.

Several days later, as word of Logan's injuries spread, Time Bomb, one of the men who allegedly helped his attacker, sent money to get him a ride to the clinic. Logan returned and they re-bandaged his wounds, then took him to a hospital where health care workers stitched him up and sent him home. They never screened him for Ebola. The next day, on 2 February, a week after the attack, Logan died.

#### **HUNTING FOR THE VIRUS**

The news of Logan's death and subsequent diagnosis triggered alarm bells for Dr Mosoka Fallah, a 44-year-old

epidemiologist and immunologist who, over the past year, has been chasing the Ebola virus across Monrovia.

He and his colleagues were tracking an outbreak in St Paul's Bridge, a community not far from Monrovia, where the disease had spread and many had refused to self-quarantine. The infected man Logan had helped in Red Light, Fallah believes, came from St Paul's. And now the doctors feared the virus would soon spread among the addicts in Spoiler's area. "Where there has been an increase and sustained cases it has always been poor communities with low social and economic security, overpopulation and poor sanitation," Fallah says. "Early on [the poor] decided that that was their fate, to be down, not to fight back and they are distrustful, because in poor communities they only trust themselves."

Several days after Logan's death, Fallah and his team travelled to the ghetto

to negotiate a voluntary quarantine with Spoiler. Fallah has worked in rough communities before, but this was his trickiest case, since Spoiler and her cohorts are part of a drug gang who deeply distrust the police and the government.

There was also the inherent tension between the doctors trying to stop an epidemic from spreading and the police trying solve a brutal crime. According to a source on the team that manages and monitors Ebola cases, they struck a deal with Spoiler. If her customers agreed to be quarantined, the source says, the police had agreed to stop the murder investigation. They allegedly made a deal so they could find Johnny and the other suspects and get them quarantined.

Fallah declined to comment on the status of the investigation and the police did not respond to multiple requests for comment. But once the dozens of young men who may have had contact with Logan agreed to be quarantined, the investigation stopped. And when the Ebola team finally caught up with Time Bomb and few other suspects, almost three weeks later, none were arrested. The nurses who cleaned and bandaged Logan's wounds were quarantined as well. The hospital worker who stitched him up later died of the virus in a treatment unit. The only person who remained at large was Johnny, the main suspect in the crime. His mother said she didn't where he was. His friends suspected he feared arrest and went into hiding. Rumours swirled that he fled and went to Sierra Leone. But no one really knew if he was dead or alive, let alone if he had the virus.

Fallah understood that finding him was crucial. Given the close contact he had with Logan, it seemed likely he too was carrying the virus. But while looking for Johnny, he had to also make sure the



## Almost every night, Logan smoked four packets of Italian White



### SCORE DRAW:

Young men smoke heroin, known as Italian White, at Spoiler's place in Red Light, Monrovia – a group of tents bearing the faded logos of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees



with friends. He was an addict, or a pookie as they say in Liberia.

young men in Spoiler's yard stayed in an Ebola treatment centre until it was clear they weren't infected.

For the next three weeks, these young men lived like kings under his watch. The doctors paid them \$10 a day, provided them with clothes, fed them chicken shwarma and soda and gave them access to satellite television – luxuries in a country where the average person survives on less than a dollar a day. The ebola treatment unit and senior officials involved in the Ebola fight even gave many of the gronnah boys a low dose of heroin and marijuana, according to workers in the unit and the men under quarantine, to keep them from escaping and potentially spreading the virus. All the while, the Ebola team tried to keep news of this unusual arrangement away from the press, fearing a scandal.

Weeks later, the 32 gronnah boys lined up at the exit of the Ebola treatment center dressed in clean T-shirts with logos that read “Goodbye to Ebola”. They were all healthy. No one, save for Logan, the health care worker who stitched him up and Blama had been infected. (Remarkably, after weeks of treatment, Blama survived and left the hospital, saying he planned to stay off drugs.)

As the men filed out of the treatment center an on to a bus, many chanted in unison: “Who let the dogs out? Who! Who!” And as they were zoomed across town on a bus, the men sang church songs as bystanders gawked. When they stepped off the bus in Red Light, Fallah handed each \$50, a bag of rice some beans and cooking oil. For Logan's family and friends, however, there was little to celebrate.

### THE MAN DOWN THERE

More than a month has passed since Logan's death, and the Ebola epidemic seems to be under control in Liberia.



In early March, a 58-year-old English teacher, Beatrice Yardolo, reportedly became the last patient to leave the country's treatment centers, taking a bouquet of fake red flowers and a toy panda with her in a stage-managed press conference designed to assuage concerns that Liberia could fall back into crisis. Two weeks later, two new cases have emerged, and the authorities have asked 80 people to quarantine themselves, but most experts say the worst is over.

Norman, however, is still trying to make sense of what happened to his stepson. He's glad the virus only spread to a few other people, but Johnny remains at-large. No one knows if he is dead or alive, or if he ever contracted Ebola. And the authorities no longer seem to be looking for him.

On a recent afternoon, Norman finally visited cemetery where Logan is buried. Located 45 minutes outside of Monrovia, in an area known as Disco

Hill, Logan's grave is a large clay mound marked with a white wooden cross. On the back of the cross, his name and the day he died, 2 February 2015 is written in black marker. “That man laying down there . . .” Norman said, then began to weep. As he cried, the wind blew, rustling the trees around the grave site. Through his tears, Norman stared at the cross. “They don't listen to me,” he said, referring to his stepsons. “That what bring him here,” he added, then turned away.

The grave and a creased photo are all the Norman and his family have to remember of Logan. The picture, taken on New Year's day this year, shows him and two friends at a popular beach, standing in the tide. He's wearing a backpack, a yellow T-shirt and pants rolled up above his ankles. He's posing playfully with a cellphone to his ear, pointing his right index finger towards the camera. But the creases in the photo largely obscure his face.



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# ACCIDENTAL BREXIT

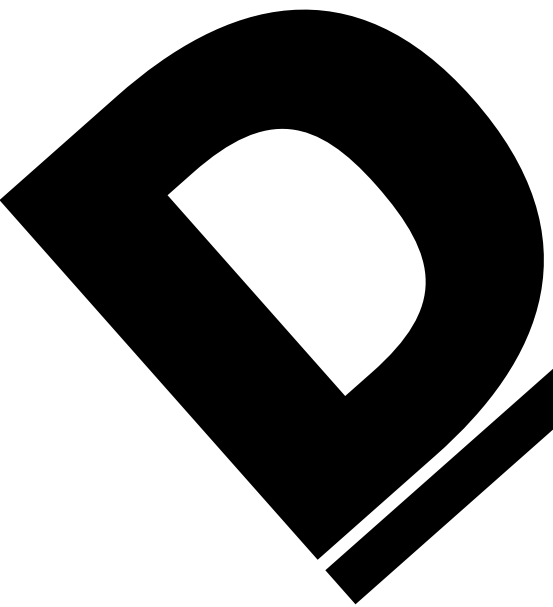
By Miranda Green  
🐦 @greenmiranda











avid Cameron is being urged to hold an early referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union within the first year of any new Conservative government – possibly as soon as next spring – in a move designed to put the 'out' campaigners at a disadvantage and persuade the electorate to live with limited reforms to the club of nations' rules.

The Conservative prime minister and his Labour rival, Ed Miliband, this week embarked on the final stages of a general election campaign so far dominated by two mainstream issues: the extent of the economic recovery, and which side can better safeguard the cherished but expensive National Health Service. Just beneath the surface, however, are existential questions about the United Kingdom's identity and its place in the world.

The most pressing of these is whether Britain will remain part of the European Union and, if so, on what terms. Pro-Europeans in the UK are nervous that Britain will find itself moving towards 'Brexit', and doing so almost by accident, because David Cameron, himself in favour of remaining in the EU, has committed himself to an 'in or out' vote before the end of 2017, a vote he now finds he may lose.

Nigel Farage, leader of the insurgent United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), has predicted the rumbling

Europe debate will "break out into the open" before 7 May, and "will come to dominate the election campaign." Farage wants the UK to go it alone, but none of the main party leaders believes Britain should leave the club of 28 nations it joined in 1973. Now all three rivals and their teams, are preoccupied with how to prevent what almost every senior politician has described as "sleepwalking towards the exit".

Cameron, however, is alone in leading a party that has remained deeply divided over Europe since the end of Margaret Thatcher's premiership in 1990 and the humiliation of Black Wednesday in 1992, when the Conservative government was forced to withdraw the pound from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism at a cost counted in the billions. Rumbling Tory discontent has now, critics say, brought the UK to the brink of isolation.

The prime minister made his promise of an 'in-out' referendum in January 2013 to pacify his restive Eurosceptic backbenchers. Staring directly into the camera during a speech at Bloomberg's London HQ, he talked solemnly about the nation's destiny: "I say to the British people: this will be your decision."

This is one commitment Cameron will not be able to break during talks with other parties in a coalition government, the most likely outcome. "He can't wriggle out of this one," admits a senior Liberal Democrat, as the UK's most pro-European party, bruised by five years of coalition, ponders how it would handle another bout of power-sharing talks.

## HEART AND SOUL

In 2013, the prime minister promised to campaign "heart and soul" to stay in – provided he could secure changes to EU rules. That full-throated enthusiasm for remaining in a reformed EU has since been tempered, drawing much criticism of what one fellow Conservative calls "appeasement and fudging." But the tactics have been enough to get him successfully to the end of his first term in office, and possibly back into Number 10 again.

For now the prime minister wants

to keep the EU off the agenda – his Australian election guru Lynton Crosby thinks anything that distracts from the main theme of economic recovery is to be avoided and has told the Tories to "get the barnacles off the boat". But if he wins enough seats in the House of Commons to form a government, attention will swiftly turn to a European summit in June.

Can other EU leaders be persuaded that it is in all of their interests to make the Union more popular with its own citizens? The UK wants to extend the single market to boost growth and change the rules on welfare benefits for immigrants. This latter point would be a response to the growing hostility to new arrivals that has prompted the resurgence of right-wing parties across the continent, and so could, say observers, find favour in other capital cities. With Marine Le Pen of the French far-right Front National also promising she will hold an in-out referendum if elected to the presidency in 2017, might Paris and Berlin see these reforms as helpful?

"He'll certainly get a better and a quicker deal if he frames it as what's good for Europe," says another former minister – MPs are unwilling to speak on anything other than an anonymous basis during this knife-edge election campaign, for fear of tipping a few votes towards UKIP even by mentioning the immigration and the EU.

Chancellor George Osborne, Cameron's closest political friend and colleague, is expected to take a lead role in the talks, and has support from political opponents in his desire to ensure that non-Eurozone countries like the UK don't become second-class citizens as the Eurozone becomes more closely unified after the debt crisis. Ministers also say they want to tone down the "ever-closer union" rhetoric of EU integration, and want national parliaments to be able to club together and block initiatives from Brussels.

Publicly, the prime minister is sticking to his commitment to hold a referendum by the end of 2017 – last month he told *The Financial Times* "Of course if you can do it in 2016 nobody would be more glad than me, but I expect it will



take longer because there are a lot of moving parts.”

But behind the scenes, Conservatives plotting the best way to sell staying in a reformed EU to the electorate believe they could bring the vote forward to next year. They say that would avoid the risk of losing what might become a mid-term verdict on a second Conservative-led period of government, and are confident that the ‘in’ side of the argument, boosted by a rapid set of successful renegotiations with Brussels, would steal a march on what they call the “better-off-outers”.

As a senior pro-European business figure puts it: “Having a referendum in the middle of a parliament is just about the worst possible thing to do if you want to avoid a kicking.” And a kicking, in this case, would mean what Cameron has warned is “a one-way ticket”.

### OUT-KIPPERING THE KIPPERS

Brave is usually a synonym for foolish in the lexicon of UK politics. But could this audacious scheme work and bounce the British into choosing a European destiny? With the polls showing an increasingly healthy margin for ‘in’ – 46% would vote to remain in the EU and 36% to leave, according to YouGov – the pro-Europeans want to strike as soon as possible.

Some pollsters claim Farage and the

**“A lot of Tory MPs now realise they can’t out-UKIP the kippers, those in their own local parties have left, and they have woken up to the fact Farage puts off more than he attracts.”**

other ‘kippers’ have pushed uncommitted voters who dislike his brash patriotism – and his social conservatism – into the pro-Europe camp. Confidence among pro-EU Tories has been boosted.

Peter Wilding, a Conservative, set up British Influence as a cross-party campaign to try and defrost the nation’s scepticism of all things European. It has already begun to rebrand as the ‘In’ campaign. According to Wilding the

tide has turned: “A lot of Tory MPs now realise they can’t out-UKIP the kippers, those in their own local parties have left, and they have woken up to the fact Farage puts off more than he attracts.” He describes a central, moderate block of Conservative MPs, including the new intake after May, “waiting for a lead from the PM”.

This positive reading of Cameron’s ability to hold his party together during an ‘in’ campaign is repeated in their view of the electorate. “There are committed ‘in’ voters and committed ‘out’ voters,” says a spokeswoman. “Most in the middle don’t know, but they would like to see Britain achieving things in the world, among friends, not isolated. They want to see Britain prevailing.”

Hence the importance, she adds, of Cameron’s reform drive. “I hope there is a referendum,” says Damian Green, a former immigration minister and one of the most prominent pro-EU voices on the Tory side. “I do think it’s time to put this question to bed. I’m confident Britain will vote to stay in and that we can then remove this cloud hanging over British public life.”

The biggest headache, and one that makes even the most optimistic of the ‘inners’ pale as they make their tactical calculations, is whether the changes will need a change to the EU’s treaties. If





so, it could trigger constitutional nightmares right across the rest of the union. There is said to be 'no appetite' in Berlin, Paris or any other capital city for such a move.

According to Denis MacShane, a one-time Europe minister in Tony Blair's government and author of a new book on possible Brexit, referendums to approve changes to EU terms usually result in a 'no' from the disgruntled populace – how many governments will want to take that risk again after the lost referendums in France, the Netherlands and Ireland during the 2000s?

But Cameron has to make the reforms look substantial, so the Tory negotiators hope to persuade other nations to agree a package that could be tagged on to the next big accession treaty when new nations join the EU.

#### LEAVING BY DEFAULT

The anti campaign, already preparing their reasons to reject whatever deal Cameron and Osborne can bring back from Brussels, are setting the bar for renegotiation impossibly high, say British Influence. Business for Britain, limbering up on the other side, insists it will not take a position until the reform package is on the table. But its chief executive Matthew Elliott, a hardened campaigner credited with a major role

**"This is a moment of danger for the country, because the prime minister has allowed the prospect of leaving to be regarded as a kind of 50-50 possibility."**

in defeating the 2011 referendum on reforming the voting system, is widely expected to organise any 'out' campaign. He wrote last month: "It is hard to see how any deal which did not include a substantial Treaty change would win the backing of the British public (to say nothing of Eurosceptic Tories)."

Campaign director Robert Oxley accuses other business groups of "paying lip service to the idea of reforming the EU when all the polls show the public want much less power going to Brussels. We need to see some major changes and if you can't get that deal, then you shouldn't be scared of looking at the alternatives."

Oxley's team has been lobbying the Labour side, and claim half Miliband's shadow ministerial team want their leader to echo the referendum promise – UKIP is also eating into traditional working class Labour votes, especially in the north of England.

But Pat McFadden, a one-time senior Blair aide and now Ed Miliband's front-bench spokesman on Europe, has no truck with such talk. He is concerned the UK may end up leaving "by default" and thinks a plebiscite would be too risky – even with the sort of united front that might make a quick-fire renegotiation and 2016 referendum result in a 'yes'. "This is a moment of danger for

the country, because the prime minister has allowed the prospect of leaving to be regarded as a kind of 50-50 possibility, and has been pushed and pulled by his sceptical backbenchers.”

MacShane agrees that there are powerful reasons to be worried that Cameron’s plan could go wrong. “There are a number of currents, tributaries if you like, in Britain that are very deep, fast moving, haven’t just arrived overnight, that if they come into a confluence then they are likely to produce an out vote.”

The pollster who kept Gordon Brown in touch with public opinion when he was in Downing Street, Deborah Matkinson, is also doubtful about the “go early” plan. “At the moment the ‘out’ arguments are more accessible, and the ‘in’ camp might need longer to make a similarly appealing case. Otherwise it boils down to using the fear factor.”

Only one voter in a range of pre-election focus groups being conducted by her company, Britain Thinks, has brought up the EU. But immigration is high among voters’ priorities and the two are related because EU citizens have the right to live and work anywhere in the union. “It’s a sleeping issue but things are very volatile and it could rise to the top. We also find that policymakers and businesspeople are already fixated with this, and with what a referendum would look like.”

Prospects are not as positive as they were during the only previous plebiscite on Europe, held in 1975, when a range of popular figures from across the political divide took to platforms around the UK to secure public approval for what was then the Common Market. “Frankly we had only been in for about five minutes and everybody was in favour” says MacShane. “And Europe is no longer the compelling economic attraction that it was.”

Scotland’s referendum on independence last September – when a melange of popular grassroots groups joined the Scottish Nationalists in tempting 45% of voters to reject the warnings of the political and business elites – has spooked the establishment about its ability to influence a restless electorate.

But Matthew Goodwin, an academic

who has cornered the market in detailed study of UKIP’s rise in traditional blue-collar areas, where poorer Britons feel themselves left behind by globalisation, believes it can be done.

He cites the new British Social Attitudes survey, an important document in taking the nation’s temperature, which shows that 69% of Britons think it is important to be allowed to live and work in other EU nations, and a higher proportion wanting to remain in a less powerful EU than leave.

#### NO WAY BACK

While varying degrees of neuralgia have set in at the top of the mainstream parties as they ponder the possibility that Britain will vote to leave the EU, two sets of insurgents are delighted, but for different reasons.

The Scottish Nationalists, for their part, see this as another opportunity to reopen the question of independence: Nicola Sturgeon, the party leader, and her predecessor Alex Salmond, have insisted that Scotland, which benefits from both EU regional funding and

**“This is the defining question of political leadership in our age. Getting out of Europe and pursuing this illusion of control is the politics of nostalgia and nationalism.”**

immigration to top up its working-age population, would not want to go. They say no referendum could be binding unless all three mainland nations, England, Scotland and Wales, voted the same way. So the results of a referendum on the European Union could be the excuse for Scottish secession despite September’s independence vote having gone against the separatists.

For UKIP, any airtime devoted to these issues is a help in splitting off Conservative voters and pursuing the end-goal of Brexit. “UKIP’s strategic success has been to elide the issue of Europe’s free movement of people with immigration,” says McFadden with grudging admiration.

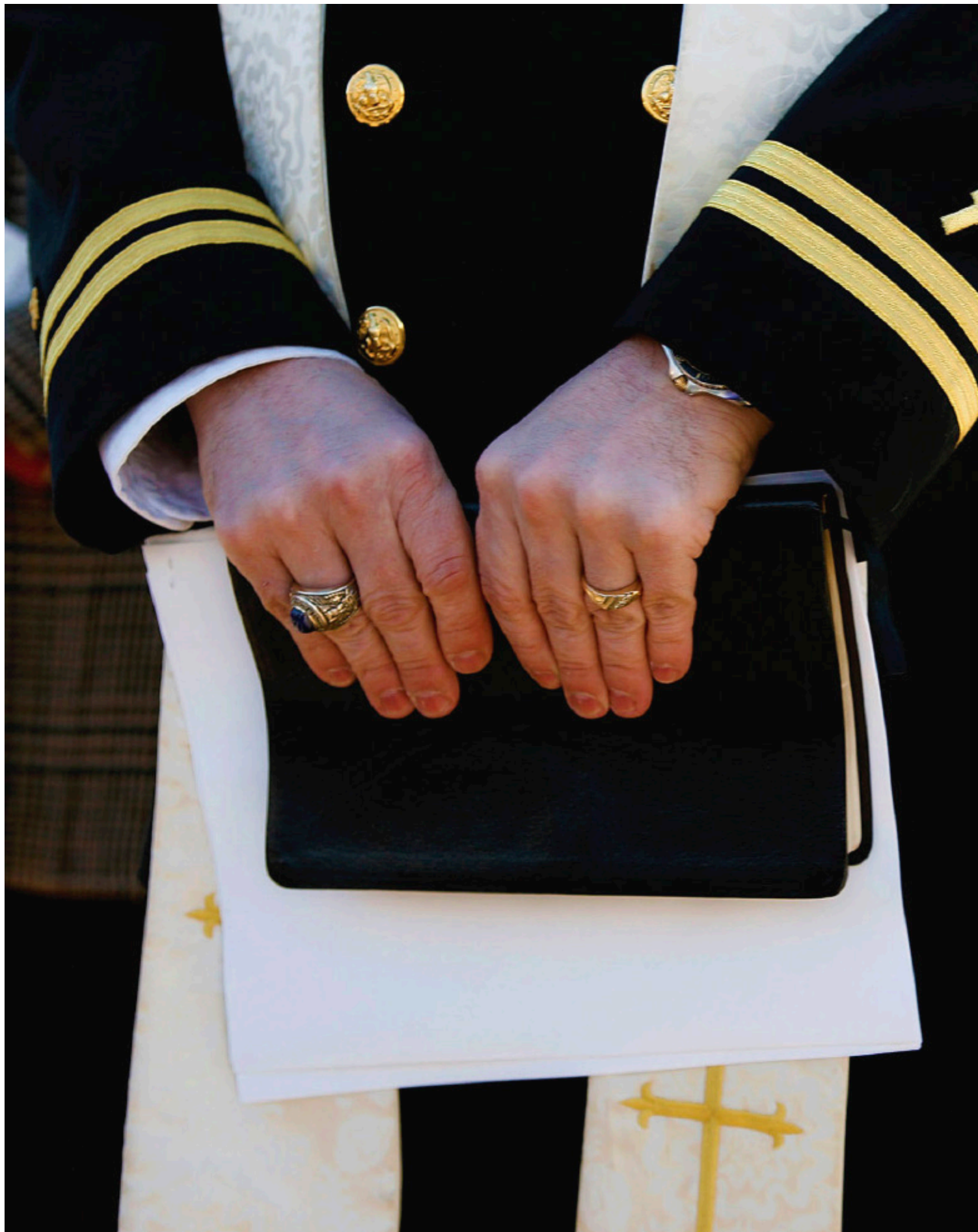
As an MP for Wolverhampton, the West Midlands town where the virulently anti-immigration Enoch Powell was once an MP, he is sensitive to divisive rhetoric in a place where industrial decline has led to a loss of jobs and identity: “Immigration is an issue that has blown hot and cold in Britain.” Powell’s 1968 ‘rivers of blood’ speech [in which the Conservative MP warned of violent consequences of Commonwealth immigration and was disowned by the political mainstream] marked a previous ‘hot moment’ he says.

For now, he wants to stop a referendum in its tracks. But he admits the challenge won’t end there. “Popular resentment about the European Union, concerns about immigration, about globalisation aren’t going to go away. But how do you respond to those concerns?”

He calls this “the defining question for political leadership in our age. I say you have to give people a chance not a grievance, because getting out of Europe and pursuing this illusion of control is the politics of nostalgia and nationalism.”

But Open Europe, a business think-tank, argues that even if Labour’s Ed Miliband won the election and ended up in Downing Street, there is a significant chance of an in-out referendum during the next five years. And it’s a tall order in that timeframe to tempt disenfranchised, alienated, working class Britain away from UKIP. No wonder the only smiles are, once again, on the faces of the political agitators.







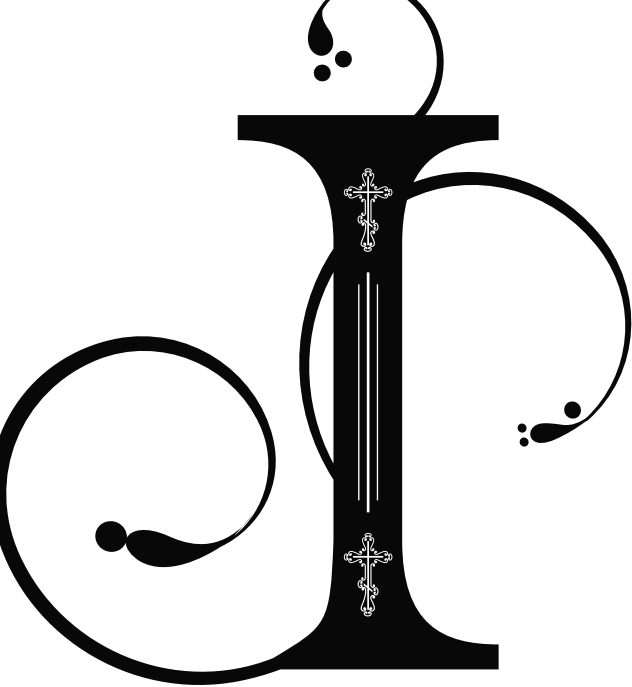
# The land of the free

# and the home of the zealots

Americans are still obsessed with their presidents' spiritual beliefs, but as Jeb Bush's road to Catholicism shows, his countrymen still switch faiths with a messy, splintered and contradictory regularity.

By Matthew Cooper [@mattizcoop](#)





t was built in the 1920s in the Spanish Mission style, topped by a red clay tile roof so popular in South Florida back then. The Catholics who built it, laid the foundation just a short walk from the famed Biltmore Hotel, modelled on the Giralda, the tower of the Seville Cathedral in Spain, and named their church in honour of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, also known as The Little Flower. Unlike so many Catholic parishes, this one boasts packed pews and “reflects a vibrant community”, Rev. Michael W. Davis, the church’s pastor tells me. Coral Gables is majority Cuban-American and so it’s not surprising that Davis is bilingual. He notes the church’s lovely setting makes it a “wedding factory”.

On a more serious note, Davis explains and discusses the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, which is the Catholic conversion programme. Little Flower’s most famous parishioner is also its most famous convert, Jeb Bush. He attends Mass frequently with his wife, Columba, and his daughter Noelle. “[He’ll be] gone all week and yet he regularly makes the liturgy,” Davis says.

Bush, of course, hails from one of America’s great preppy families, more strongly associated with J. Press suits and Kennebunkport tennis than a La Santa Misa. Jeb – which is an acronym for John Ellis Bush – joked in New York in 2013, “I’m no longer a WASP, I guess I’m a W.A.S.C.” The Bushes are famously of the Episcopal wing of Protestantism, whose origins trace back, in part, to Henry VIII’s peevish break with Rome. As a young man, Bush showed no interest in Catholicism, the Vatican or much of anything except, perhaps, baseball and weed. He attended Phillips Academy Andover, like his brother George W, the 43rd US president, and played

baseball there, like his father, the 41st. At Andover, he took a semester abroad, building houses for the poor in Caracas, Venezuela, and was smitten with Columba de Gallo, a Mexican high school student who was also visiting Caracas. They married when she was 20 and he was 21 and they became bilingual. It took the Bushes some getting used to a devoutly Catholic in-law and this being the mid-70s, a time of coups and juntas in Latin America, it probably didn’t help with her family that Columba’s new father-in-law was head of the CIA.

For years, Jeb and Columba stayed in Caracas, then moved to Miami where he carved out a living in real estate, investments and politics. The couple attended Mass together, their children were baptised and given confirmations, but Jeb didn’t convert. It wasn’t owing to any great need to retain his ties to the Episcopal church, friends say. He just didn’t feel moved to take on the course of studying and go through the rites to become a full-fledged Catholic.

That changed in 1996. He took RCIA, the gateway to conversion, at the Church of the Epiphany in Miami, when he was 43. Bush has said he was motivated “by the faith of my wife. I didn’t want to raise our children in a mixed marriage”, although that explanation is a little puzzling since Jeb’s children were 20, 19 and 13 at the time. Bush has also acknowledged that there were strains in his marriage back then, many related to his 1994 bid for governor of Florida. It was Jeb’s first run for office and it weighed heavily on Columba, who has never cottoned to the role of being a hand-waving, ribbon-cutting, speech-giving candidate’s wife. “You’re away from home. There’s stress,” says one person close to Bush, explaining the clouds over the marriage then. What’s more, Bush lost that race. Sure, the Bush men had seen defeat in a few elections over the decades, but Jeb’s loss was particularly disheartening in a year when so many Republicans were swept into office nationwide, and his brother George, got elected Governor of Texas, despite being an underdog. Like so many people – whether or not they’re pols – Jeb turned to religion in hard times. That emotional trough may have been the catalyst for his conversion, but Jeb soon became an enthusiastic Catholic who loved the ritual and the sacraments.

Bush even started carrying a rosary in his pocket – a habit that continues to this day – but he retained his father’s reluctance to talk about his faith. “He’s not a cufflinks Catholic,” says Jim Towey, the president of Ave Maria University near in Naples, Florida, and a longtime friend of the Bushes. By that, Towey means that Bush



**FAMILY VALUES:**  
Jeb Bush converted to Catholicism nearly two decades ago – adopting the faith of his Mexican-born wife, Columba



“Like a lot of people who convert [Jeb] has a zeal about it and a joy.”

DANIEL ACKER, JOSHUA ROBERTS/GETTY

isn't showy about it. “Faith isn't something he talks a lot about,” says Towey, who ran the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in the George W Bush White House. A former lawyer, Towey dedicated his life to Christ after a mission to Calcutta to work with Mother Theresa, and he became her counsel in America. “Like a lot of people who convert, [Jeb] has a zeal about it and a joy,” he says. He recalls taking Jeb and Columba to Tijuana to meet with priests who had worked with Mother Theresa. The Mexican clergy greeted the visitors with song at the bus stop, a welcome that stirred something in Bush: “You could see his joy. He was moved to tears.”

Jeb Bush's road to Catholicism is representative of the noble and messy, maddening and comforting, always contradictory and confusing ways that faith and politics intersect in America. We like to say we are independent thinkers basing our votes on carefully crafted political beliefs and goals, but we often vote with our

tribe. We're a church-going people but we elect a diverse set of presidents – some who profess to having been saved, like Jeb's brother, George, and men with a decidedly more secular mien, like Barack Obama. This year's growing gaggle of presidential aspirants is an intriguing snarl of inconsistencies when it comes to faith – much like the rest of America.

So while the media obsesses about Hillary Clinton's emails or Ted Cruz's pugilism or Chris Christie's girth, one the biggest stories of the 2016 campaign will be how faith has changed the candidates themselves – and how it may decide which of the dozen or so likely candidates will be sworn in as our next president on 20 January 2017.

And consider for a moment the messy, mixed messages of that Inauguration Day, a pageant that's so peculiar and so right for a republic that says it loves God, but bans organised prayer from our schools. It's a ceremony that's secular, yet





shrouded with religious references and symbolism. The incoming president lays his hand on the Bible – and so far it’s only been a man and it’s only been a Bible – and pledges to God that he will defend a Constitution that forbids a religious test for public office. It is both inspiring and contradictory. And when it comes to God and politics, so are we all.

#### HILLARY THE METHODIST

Bush’s conversion to Catholicism was a very personal journey of faith, and a journey millions of his fellow Americans have made. People in the US switch faiths with remarkable frequency. There aren’t firm statistics comparing, say, conversion rates in the 19th century to those today, but social scientists say it’s on the rise. And that’s surprising, because Americans have always been impulsive shoppers when it comes to their pew of choice. Think of the remarkable rise of that uniquely American creed, Mormonism, and the charismatic evangelists like Aimee Semple McPherson and Billy Graham, and the vast mega-churches.

According to the Pew Research Center’s Reli-

gion in Public Life Project, more than half of all Americans will leave the church of their youth at some point in their lives – a figure that suggests most churches and temples and mosques are launching pads, not permanent homes.

Many parishioners who flee, eventually return to the fold but the Religion in Public Life Project, in their Faith in Flux report, says that about 40% of those who give up the religion of their birth simply don’t return. And many are joining a flock that’s one of the fastest growing religious groups in America – those who believe in a higher being but don’t feel attached to any church. These “Nones” comprise almost 20%

Bush’s road to Catholicism is representative of the noble and messy, maddening and comforting, always contradictory and confusing ways that faith and politics intersect in American life.



**BOUND BY FAITH:** A devout Methodist, Hillary Clinton once said that her faith is like “background music to her life”

of adults in this country.

Making the picture even more complicated is the question of dabbling in two religions. A relatively small number of Americans identify with more than one faith, e.g. “I’m Muslim and Lutheran.” And that doesn’t include another burgeoning group social scientists know is out there, but haven’t yet measured – Americans who identify with one religion but who also casually borrow practices from another – like Buddhist chanting or Hindu meditation.

At times it seems like we’re shopping for churches as if we’re pushing a cart at Walmart. But we’re pious, too. Americans have among the highest church attendance rates among Western countries. Around four out of 10 Americans report attending a service in the past week. That number is close to 15% in Great Britain. And with apologies to Bill Maher, American voters have no interest in atheists. No non-believer has ever made a serious run for president, and only one of the 535 members of Congress lists their religion as “none”. And while very few of us would pick our surgeon or plumber based on his or her faith, we expect our politicians to be pious. We want to know they pray, even though we don’t seem to care all that much about how they pray.

#### **HARRY DRINKS, JIMMY PRAYS**

But how much faith is enough? In presidential candidates, Americans are all over the map. Harry Truman was a drinking, gambling Baptist who didn’t talk a lot about his faith. Jimmy Carter drank rarely, never gambled, and was a loquacious Baptist eager to share being Born Again. George W Bush, an Episcopalian turned Methodist, has told journalists and said in his memoir how he stopped drinking. “I believe God helped open my eyes which were closing because of booze,” he wrote in his memoir *Decision Points*. He was followed in the White House by Barack Obama, who talks about his faith but in a less emotional, more intellectual way.

We don’t seem quite as bigoted as we once were when it comes to judging a candidate’s religion. (Race is another matter.) Mitt Romney’s Mormonism didn’t stop him from being the Republican nominee against Obama. Joe Lieberman, who is Jewish, didn’t seem to be a drag on Al Gore’s ticket, since they won the majority of votes in the 2000 presidential election. Conservative Catholic Rick Santorum polled best in the South in 2012, while John Kennedy in 1960 had to solemnly swear to Dixiecrats that he wouldn’t take orders from the Vatican.

But tribalism still rules at the ballot box. Among Mormons, 80% lean Republican accord-

ing to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. Jews lean 65% Democratic. Atheists and agnostics are 71% Democratic. Black Protestants lean 88% Democratic. White Evangelicals are 70% Republican. And while it’s true that Catholicism is big enough to include Nancy Pelosi and John Boehner, Bill O’Reilly and Stephen Colbert, where we worship is often an excellent predictor of how we’ll cast our vote.

#### **AQUA BUDDHA AND PURIFYING FIRE**

This crop of aspiring presidential candidates reflect this country’s many contradictions in faith. A minority have stuck with their first church. Hillary Clinton has always been a devout Methodist – her conversion was from Goldwater Girl to 1960s liberal under the tutelage of her suburban Chicago pastor, Don Jones, who took his youth group to hear Martin Luther King Jr speak. Mike Huckabee, the former Arkansas governor and minister, has never strayed from his Baptist roots – his latest book is called *God, Guns, Grits and Gravy*. Rick Santorum has always been Catholic; he tells *Newsweek* his faith was invigorated while he was in the Senate, owing to factors like his parish priest in Northern Virginia, his experiences of fellowship in the Bible Study Group in the Senate and his wife’s deep faith.

Ben Carson, the renowned neurosurgeon, hews closely to Seventh-Day Adventist beliefs, which include observing the sabbath on Saturday instead of Sunday and a literal belief in a creation. (Carson allows that the Earth was formed over six “periods” but insists that whatever the length of time it took, it was God and not Darwinian struggle that made us who we are.) Known for performing a groundbreaking operation separating twins at the head, Carson says his faith strengthened when he had an epiphany as a teenager that took him from a path to prison to one that made him the pride of Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. “I had a hair-trigger temper,” he says. “But doubt has crept out of my life over the years. I’ve seen too many miraculous things.” Carson’s presidential aspirations got a boost when he used the National Prayer Breakfast earlier this year to chide Obamacare – while standing just a few feet from the president.

But the rest of the Republican candidates are, like Jeb Bush, switchers . . . just like so many of the voters they are hoping to woo. Some of those shifts have been modest: Rand Paul was raised Episcopalian and is now a Presbyterian. The libertarian-leaning Republican may be best known for a very different and much less serious liturgy. In his 2010 Senate bid, Paul had to explain a college hazing ritual he took part in at Baylor



University, one that forced pledges of the NoZe brotherhood to pray to a faux God, Aqua Buddha.

Other 2016 aspirants have made more dramatic moves, like Bush's conversion to Catholicism. Ted Cruz was born to lapsed Catholic parents, but his father, Rafael, a Cuban exile, became Born Again when Ted was a toddler. "I'm Cuban, Irish and Italian, and yet somehow I ended up Southern Baptist," says Cruz, who attended Baptist schools growing up. His father is now a preacher with the Purifying Fire International Ministry, founded by religious broadcasters Benny and Suzanne Hinn, and Rafael Cruz preaches more than the Gospel. The elder Cruz has said Obama is trying to take "our God, and our gun" through the UN.

Marco Rubio's story is just as interesting. The son of Cuban refugees, the Florida Senator was born Catholic, but when his family moved west it converted to Mormonism and Rubio was baptised in the Church of Latter Day Saints. As a

teen he came back to the Catholic fold and is still a Roman Catholic. These days, Rubio attends Mass but since his wife was raised Baptist, he also spends Sundays at an independent Christian church near Miami. Some might say that second scoop of church diminishes Rubio's Catholicism but it is the kind of religious fusion, for lack of a better word, so many Americans embrace

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's father is a retired Baptist preacher, and if the Republican Governor wins he, like Cruz, would be the first preacher's kid in the White House since Woodrow Wilson. Like many Americans, Walker now attends an evangelical non-denominational church.

John Kasich, the Republican governor of Ohio, who seems increasingly likely to join the presidential fray, was born a Catholic but became an Anglican after his parents perished in a car accident. Today he speaks openly about his faith and how it affects his governing, even citing the Gospels to defend his decision –



**RELIGIOUS PROTEST:** US Senator Ted Cruz leads members of the Christian Defense Coalition in front of the White House in solidarity with Saeed Abedini, an Iranian-American pastor who is serving eight years in an Iranian prison



"I'm Cuban,  
Irish and  
Italian,  
and yet  
somehow  
I ended up  
Southern  
Baptist."

rare among Republican governors – to accept Obamacare funds to expand Medicaid. When you meet St Peter at Heaven's Gate, Kasich told an Ohio legislator, "he's probably not gonna ask you much about what you did about keeping government small, but he's going to ask you what you did for the poor."

### EXORCISM AND RHODES SCHOLARS

The boy sat in the closet with the door closed, worried that his parents would find him and be sad and angry about what he was reading. He was awed, in the truest sense of the word, by the printed words in front of him. He'd been a great student, the pride of his mother and father, who had emigrated to Baton Rouge from Punjab just a few months before he was born. But this was a traditional Indian home, and teenage Piyush, enraptured by the New Testament, feared his parents disappointment at seeing him swept away by immersed in the words of Jesus.

Today, that boy is no longer Hindu and he's no longer known as Piyush. He's called Bobby Jindal, the governor of Louisiana, a proud Roman Catholic. (Born in 1971, he took his nickname from the youngest son on *The Brady Bunch*.) And, yes, he says, his parents are okay with it now. "I used to think that I had found God, but I believe it is more accurate to say that He found me," Jindal says. He had flirtations with Protestant churches of various kind, as he grew up in the 1980s and 1990s but when he attended Brown University he found a Catholic Church and settled in.

At Brown, Jindal even took part in what has been widely described as an exorcism, although the Rhodes Scholar avoids that label. Either way, this makes him the only candidate who has acknowledged participating in anything like that. Jindal wrote about it in a 1995 article, "Physical Dimensions of Spiritual Warfare" for the *New Oxford Review*. The incident involved a fellow student, "Susan", who had been facing medical issues and seemed to have a seizure but not in a Hollywood, head-spinning way. Nevertheless, Jindal and friends, who were holding a prayer meeting to help Susan, sensed they were witnessing a spiritual crisis, and intervened. He wrote:

"The crucifix had a calming effect on Susan, and her sister was soon brave enough to bring a Bible to her face. At first, Susan responded to biblical passages with curses and profanities. Mixed in with her vile attacks were short and desperate pleas for help."

That Jindal needn't hide his participation in a "spiritual warfare", or that Huckabee is running as a preacher as much as an ex-Governor shows that we're a long way from what might be called

the Kennedy conundrum. In 1960, JFK was only the second Catholic presidential nominee of a major party. (The other, New York Governor Al Smith, lost to the Republican candidate, Herbert Hoover, in 1928.) John Kennedy made the argument not just for his own purposes – to woo Protestant voters suspicious of his Catholicism – but for all politicians that personal faith had nothing to do with governing. He said, "I believe in a president whose religious views are his own private affair." In other words, God is great at home but not at the office.

That personal and voluntary separation of church and state seems to be an antiquated notion. The dilemma for today's candidates is how much religion is too much. We haven't hit the limit yet. Jeb Bush speaks for most candidates when he says, "As it relates to making decisions as a public leader, one's faith should guide you." And if you're Mormon or have performed an exorcism-ish rite or attend two churches? Most voters seem to be fine with that.

Looking back at past presidents, there is no pattern and no precedence, when it comes to God and governing. Many of the great presidents seemed to follow what the MBA types call Best Practices. Thomas Jefferson attended church and believed in a supreme being but most historians tag him a deist who believed in God but perhaps not the divinity of Christ. Whatever his inclination or ambivalence, Jefferson is the man America can thank for its freedom of religion. Abraham Lincoln evoked God repeatedly as he sought to preserve the Union and, later, to end slavery. But he never joined a church – although he rented a pew when he was president. He was accused in his 1846 campaign for the House of Representatives of being "a scoffer of Christianity". It was a charge Lincoln denied while acknowledging, "That I am not a member of any Christian church is true." Yet signs of his faith abounded. When freed slaves presented him with a Bible, he declared: "In regard to this great book, I have but to say, it is the best gift God has given to man."

Ronald Reagan was born into the Disciples of Christ denomination and was famous for his lack of church attendance as president. But he believed in God, and believed that God believed in America. His frequent likening of America to the shining city on the hill – a phrase from Jesus's "Sermon on the Mount" – has become a holy cliché in American politics.

Jefferson, Lincoln and Reagan show that there are many roads to political heaven, and that it's less important how you read the Bible than how well you use the pulpit.





## NEW WORLD

# TWIN ASTRONAUTS ON MISSION TO PREPARE HUMANS FOR LIFE ON MARS

To test how the body holds up after a year in space, NASA sends Scott Kelly to live in space – and keeps his brother as a control

**FLAT, BROAD** and remote, the semi-arid steppes of Kazakhstan are home to the world's oldest space launch facility, the Baikonur Cosmodrome. The location initially served as a missile test site for the former Soviet Union and was chosen for its emptiness. The first human to travel into space, Yuri Gagarin, rocketed into orbit from this facility in 1961. Since then, Baikonur has grown into a bustling complex of launch and ground control facilities and a town populated by those who run them.

But the desert steppes east of the Aral Sea are still barren and otherworldly. In fact, in the right light, if you look in a certain direction, the Cosmodrome's surroundings look a lot like the dream destination of many rocket scientists, cosmonauts and explorers: Mars. And on 27 March, a Soyuz spacecraft launched from the Cosmodrome, carrying US astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko, off on a mission in which one of the primary goals is to see how the human body would hold up on a trip to the Red Planet.

The two space travellers journeyed six times around the Earth (that took them about six hours), then docked at the International Space Station about 200 miles into low-Earth orbit. That's where they will spend the next year: within the orbiting lab's 13,696 cubic feet, roughly the size of a six-bedroom house. It's called the one-year mission – though thanks to strict rocket launch schedules, the sojourn will end up 23 days shy of an Earth year.

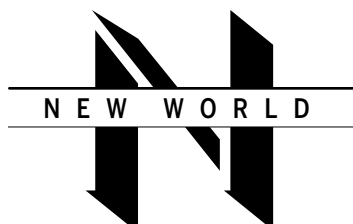
It's the latest in a series of Mars-centric NASA projects. On 11 March, the agency tested a booster rocket that will help propel its Space Launch System rocket and an Orion spacecraft to deep space destinations, including Mars. An Orion made a four-and-a-half-hour test flight 3,600 miles into space in December 2014; data from that test will be used to improve the spacecraft's design. Engineers are also testing new spacesuit designs and next-generation drag devices that will be needed to land safely the heavier craft that will travel to other planets. But perhaps the most important thing NASA is working on when it comes to the eventual

**OUTER SPACE:** NASA astronaut Scott Kelly, right, and Russian Mikhail Kornienko were selected for a year-long mission to the ISS to collect data for future study of human life in the solar system

BY  
**MELISSA GASKILL**  
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mission to Mars is preparing the astronauts.

Kelly and Kornienko make good test subjects. Kelly will be adding to 180 days previously spent aloft since 1999 on space shuttles and the ISS, while Kornienko logged 176 days on two previous ISS expeditions. They won't be the first to spend roughly a year off the Earth, either. Four Russian cosmonauts did so between 1987 and 1995, with Valery Polyakov holding the record at 14 months on the Mir space station in 1994 and 1995.

But this one-year mission is less about records and more about science. Way back in the 1990s (bioscience moves fast), we had a relatively limited understanding of what long periods of time in space did to the human body and mind. So, about three years ago, managers at Roscosmos, the Russian federal space agency, suggested a one-year mission, with a goal of moving us closer to sending humans to Mars. NASA quickly signed on.

This project has been a long time coming. In fact, NASA's Human Research Program at the Johnson Space Center in Houston has, for years, been tasked with solving Mars-type mission problems, says John B Charles, the programme's associate manager for international science. It uses the ISS to conduct research and develop technologies that will allow humans to travel longer and farther in space, covering everything from providing appetising and nutritious food, to protecting astronauts from increased radiation exposure and developing ways they can remain physically fit.

A mission to Mars would take at least 30 months, much more time than humans have spent in space, and well beyond the typical six-month stints on ISS. Research on the space station has taught scientists much about what happens to humans after those six months in space, documenting bone and muscle loss, damage to the immune system and thickening of the arteries, to name a few. But whether those and other effects continue through the next six months and beyond, and at what pace, remain a mystery.

The Human Research Program dug into its data and chose 17 investigations it had done during space flights for Kelly to reprobe on his year-long trip. The goal, of course, is to compare the impacts of the shorter trips on the human body with the effects of a long flight. It helps that Kelly has been up in the ISS before: "We picked several experiments that Kelly performed on his previous six-month mission to make that comparison very clear," Charles says.

Some of the experiments address issues scientists know will pose problems on long-term missions, such as decline in fine motor skills and vision. For example, nearly a third of American astronauts have experienced impaired vision while in space. Researchers suspect that this happens because in the absence of Earth's gravity, fluids in the body shift around, with more ending up in the head, where it changes the shape of the eyeball. Two investigations are examining whether that is what happens and if so, exactly how.

To test and track fine motor skills, Kelly and Kornienko will perform a set of specific tasks on a touchscreen (including dragging, pinching and rotating) at regular intervals, while other subjects perform the same tasks on Earth. Fine motor skills will be critical for landing on Mars or other planets, especially early on, before there's ground support. They and other crew members are also keeping journals researchers will review periodically for insight into how each responds to the isolation and confinement of the space station. Though it might sound unscientific, studying the journals of astronauts spurred changes to the ISS, such as the addition of a seven-window cupola (which has room for two crew members to work at the same time and spectacular views) and private sleep chambers (which means no more sleeping in the middle of the office, as it were).

Then there's the part of the mission that's been getting the most media attention: following Kelly's selection for the one-year mission, NASA scientists realised they had another unique opportunity on their hands given the fact that he has an identical twin, retired astronaut Mark Kelly.

Taking advantage of the fact that Scott and Mark are as alike as any two humans can be, the twins study experiments focus primarily on the effects of space flight at the genetic level. While Scott is in space, Mark will serve as a control subject. Of course, one pair of twins hardly qualifies as a statistically significant sample, so these studies won't be able definitively to separate effects of space flight from the normal differences that exist between all humans – even identical twins. But, Charles says, the twins study could help identify previously unanticipated poten-



#### US STUDIES ON THE ONE-YEAR MISSION COVER SEVEN CATEGORIES:

##### 1. Functional

Examining post-flight changes in crew member performance of functional tasks (such as ladder climbing, hatch opening and obstacle avoidance.)

##### 2. Behavioural Health

Studies on the psychological effects of long-duration space flight using cognition tests, neuromapping studies, sleep monitoring, journal analyses and a reaction self-test.

##### 3. Visual Impairment

Investigating response of the body and eyes to fluid shifts in a weightless environment.

##### 4. Metabolic

Study of changes in white blood cell count, stress hormones, and proteins and chemicals in the blood used as indicators of health, and of the risk of atherosclerosis on long-duration space flight.

##### 5. Physical Performance

Examining exercise capability with a focus on physical performance of bone, muscle and the cardiovascular system over time.

##### 6. Microbial

Examining changes in crew member microbiome (ie, the microbes that live on and within the body).

##### 7. Human Factors

Studies of how astronauts interact with their environment aboard the ISS, focusing on fine motor performance, habitability and training retention.

tial issues with longer space flight, so NASA can examine those issues more in-depth before it sends any astronauts to Mars.

Kelly is cautiously optimistic about the one-year mission. "I'm hopeful there's not a big cliff out there with regard to our ability to stay and live and work in space for longer periods of time," he said in January, before departing for a final two months of training in Russia. "I think we're not going to know until we've actually done it. I look forward to coming back and saying the data suggest that a year is no problem."

Meanwhile, life on the ISS will go on as usual. The first expedition to it docked on 2 November, 2000, and the orbiting laboratory has been continuously occupied since by a revolving cast of 215 individuals. During Kelly and Kornienko's stay, 13 other crew members will come and go, remaining anywhere from 10 days to six months and conducting their own experiments. And, in addition to taking part in the one-year investigations, Kelly and Kornienko will be helping with regular ISS maintenance and operation. For example, they'll be working on the wiring of the space station, and reconfiguring some of its components in order to improve its docking capabilities.

There will probably be more long-term human space trips to follow. The Human Research Program has proposed additional one-year missions, Charles says. (The request is currently under consideration by the ISS partners: NASA and Roscosmos, along with the European, Canadian and Japanese space agencies.) Kelly and Kornienko deflected questions about whether they would sign up for another one-year mission, although neither ruled it out. "Space is a magical place," Kelly said at the final pre-launch press conference. "It's the most fun you can have."

Whether he still feels that way after returning to the Kazakhstan steppes some 340 days from now remains to be seen.

**BLAST-OFF:**  
A Soyuz rocket launches from Baikonur, left. Kelly during a spacesuit fit check at NASA's Johnson Space Center, below



NASA. BILL INGALLS/GETTY

## ADVERTORIAL



**Dr. Lynda Foulder-Hughes**  
Paediatric Occupational Therapist

## 21st-century professionals

### DYSPRAXIA INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

I saw Peter\* at age six. His main difficulties were handwriting, sitting up posture and reading. He was initially diagnosed with global developmental delay, but his mum knew this was wrong. He was riding a bike without stabilisers at age three. I assessed him as having developmental coordination disorder (DCD) or dyspraxia.

Lynda Foulder-Hughes is a member of the British Association of Occupational Therapists with a PhD in child health. She specialises in DCD in children.

'Peter wasn't getting the help he needed at school. He had problems using a knife and fork which is common with children with handwriting difficulties. It's all related to bilateral skills. One hand needs to be steady while the other is carrying out a different task all together. I introduced the "hill and bridge" game. The curve on the back of a fork is the hill; the knife's straight bit on the back is the bridge. Cutting up pretend Plasticine food, I'd say, "Now the bridge goes over the hill. It's a windy day and the bridge is swaying back and forth." So Peter could visualise it and know to cut and keep the fork still.'

With the right diagnosis and intervention programme, Peter got consistency in his life at home, in school and in his leisure activities. 'In his intervention programme I gave him a lot of crawling activities. I developed tiger football, where children dribble a ball between their hands while crawling. This doesn't just help those with movement difficulties, children developing without difficulties also benefit.'

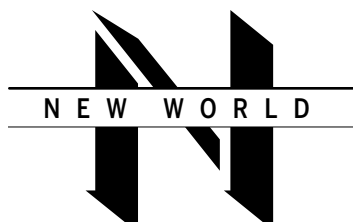
'It's common to diagnose children with problems as early as possible, but this case got me thinking that if we label children too early they can be disadvantaged and unlikely to develop their full potential.'

*\*Name has been changed*

By Andy Friedman [parnglobal.com](http://parnglobal.com)







## SO, MR BOND, YOU HAVE COME FOR YOUR BULLETPROOF SUIT

Plus trousers, shirts, robes, underpants – there’s an armoured garment for every well-dressed spy or terrorism target

“**MOST PEOPLE** who walk into our shop don’t realise what’s going on back there,” Abbas Haider tells me as he explains the intricacies of bulletproof underpants. Haider is the founder of Aspetto, a custom bulletproof clothier, which he runs along with Robert Davis. The front room of their small store in Fredericksburg, Virginia, is littered with silk swatches from Italy. The back, however, is filled with what the owners call “ballistics” – what we civilians might call armour. Haider is careful to clarify that every piece of body armour is, technically, bullet-resistant, not bulletproof: “Nothing in this world can be genuinely bulletproof, because there will always be something in development that can penetrate it.”

While Aspetto does large contract orders for vests and shirts (small, medium and large), the company’s unique feature is its high-end custom-design work. Its products include three-piece suits, dress shirts, backpacks, helmets, traditional Middle Eastern garments and even boxer shorts, which do a very good job of protecting the femoral artery from bleeding out if shot.

The clothes are often based on European runway designs, and samples are sent back and forth to get the fit right. By focusing on high fashion, Aspetto hopes to achieve the fame of Miguel Caballero, a Colombia-based bulletproof clothing designer who held an all-bulletproof fashion

show last year in Mexico City.

Haider and Davis say they are obsessed with making their bulletproof attire look less, well, bulletproof. The duo designed hidden compartments in the lining of the garments for the panels, the texture of which is reminiscent of a tough sponge. The armour is zipped in and can be removed to dry-clean the garment. This design requires an extremely lightweight bulletproof material. The company teamed up with Point Blank Enterprises to create a material capable of stopping handgun bullets and bomb shrapnel. Though the material is half the weight of standard bullet-proof panels, it still meets safety standards and can fend off 9mm, .40 calibre and .45 semi-automatic rifle bullets, among others.

The newly-improved bulletproof vest weighs less than four pounds and is one-quarter-inch thick. The stuff is also stronger than that worn by most cops. “Our ballistic package exceeds the NIJ, DEA and FBI testing requirements,” Haider says, referring to standards set by the US National Institute of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The pair are understandably reluctant to discuss their dealings with the FBI, CIA and DOD (Department of Defense). “We are doing . . . some stuff with these agencies.” After much badgering, they hint that their new bulletproof,

BY  
**POLLY MOSENDZ**  
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**PERFECT FIT:** Never mass-produced, Aspetto suits are customised to the wearer's measurements and armour ballistics are integrated upon request



fire-retardant undershirt was of interest to “some” agencies.

While they keep mum on US government contracts, Haider says Aspetto has picked up two government clients in the Middle East: it now dresses the security company for members of the Afghan government and some women in the Saudi Arabian royal family. After the introduction of their lightweight ballistic material, Aspetto’s founders were approached by a representative of the Saudi royal family. Some women in the family, unnamed for their protection, were interested in purchasing dresses. The women were seeking jalabiya, kaftan-like gowns that can be decorated with intricate embroidery. The garment had to be made of flowing, delicate silk.

“They asked us to develop some styles which integrate ballistics to protect the stomach, heart and lungs,” Haider says. The process is ongoing, as samples are passed from the company to the women through an aide. “We’ve created several possibilities so far. Because it’s all silk, the protective material is almost like a tape. It holds the

weight of the ballistics, but it retains the fluid movement.” For its Afghan clients, Aspetto is creating kurtas, long shirts for men which fall below the knees. “We have to make it of the best cotton, as well as undetectably bulletproof, because the security detail will be wearing it surrounded by parliament members.”

In an effort to keep their bulletproof goods out of the wrong hands, Aspetto does a careful background check for clients. “Anyone who wears our ballistics, we have to know who they are,” Haider says. In the US, they do a state and federal check for felonies. International shoppers must first register their information with the clothier, which then checks it against records at the Ministry of Interior of the client’s home nation. Individual orders spike for Aspetto at times of bad news. After the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, Haider and Davis received their most unusual and upsetting order: a child’s backpack.

After the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting “a big advocate of freedom of speech, who you have probably seen on Fox News,” says Haider, enquired about Aspetto’s bulletproof undershirts – the ones you can’t see under a dress shirt. That undershirt is their most popular item, most commonly purchased by anti-narcotics authorities, businessmen abroad and dignitaries.

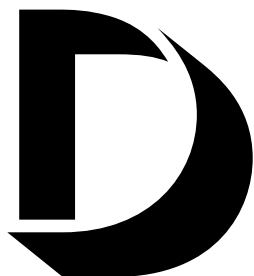
With government contracts in hand and their lightweight material perfected, Haider and Davis are turning their attention to the next big thing in bulletproof gear: wearable tech. They’re also seeing a budding market for women’s goods: their last government contract bid included 1,500 undershirts for women. They are working to perfect the fit of a woman’s blazer when it’s lined with bulletproof panels. “We have to be extremely careful to make sure a woman’s suit is form-fitting with the added material and doesn’t stand out from an off-the-rack suit,” Haider explains. “We currently have 500 fabric options.”

Aspetto has also received an increased number of requests to re-engineer luxury pocket books with a bulletproof lining. One woman brought in a Chanel bag, valued at several thousand dollars, and spent another thousand to have it made bulletproof. She declined to discuss the nature of her work, saying only that she needed it for business abroad.

All of this comes at a very high cost. Aspetto suits cost \$5,000 to \$7,000, dress shirts are around \$1,000. “Your traditional good, tailored suit is \$2,000 to \$3,000,” Haider points out. “We are protecting your life for \$5,000.” And for another \$1,500, you can buy the bulletproof boxers to cover the rest of your assets. No one ever said being like James Bond came cheap. N

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## DOWNTIME

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# IT'S THE END FOR MAD MEN – AND FOR DON DRAPER'S LONG DANCE WITH DEATH

The show's creator, Matthew Weiner, says farewell to his self-destructive hero and explains the power and loneliness of this matinee idol existentialist

I WAS ONCE HIRED by a Big Tobacco company to make a magazine that had nothing to do with cigarettes. It was to be filled with stories and images of men out in the wilderness, on the road, in the desert, but always . . . alone. The subtext being: here you can smoke without being annoyed by pesky people. Kind of like being dead.

"That's what Marlboro Country is," says Matthew Weiner, creator of *Mad Men*. "It's a non-specific drug state that is probably like heaven."

*Mad Men* made the link between commerce and ecstasy explicit while conducting its own distanced dance with death. "Happiness is the smell of a new car," said Don Draper (Jon Hamm), creative director of the fictional advertising agency Sterling Cooper. "It's freedom from fear." But go back and watch the very first episode; Don must come up with a way to sell Lucky Strikes after the 1960 *Reader's Digest* report linking cigarettes to cancer. Various strategies are discussed, including one that leans on America's "death wish" as a selling point. (The client is not impressed.)

Don, of course, rescues the meeting and comes up with a pitch that emphasises how Luckies are made ("It's Toasted"). When the client protests that all cigarettes are toasted he counters, "Everyone else's tobacco is poisonous. Lucky Strikes are toasted." Allowing consumers to deny death another day.

Weiner and I are talking in Hollywood's Chateau Marmont, a hotel that has its own association with death (it was here John Belushi overdosed in 1982). He is preparing for the show's final run of seven episodes, beginning at the start of April, and is eager to talk at length about the whole arc of the show, Don's decline (and resurrection), and the relationships between key characters – everything but the actual plot points in the first episode of the final seven. He's OK with mentioning the title – "Severance" – and all that the word implies. Death has a cameo.

"It's about the life not lived," he tells me. "People on their deathbeds often say, 'I wish I had spent less time worrying about what other

**FINAL BOW:** *Mad Men* is seven episodes away from its end and one of the most burning questions is whether Don Draper dies in the finale

BY  
**SEAN ELDER**  
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people wanted me to do or thought of me’,” says Weiner, who’s clearly referring to his sometimes seemingly perverse need to defy the audience’s expectations. “I always use the example of a guy who goes to a party, meets a girl, she gives him her phone number and he loses it,” he says. “In a TV show he’ll go back to the party, find it in some way. In *Mad Men* he will never see her again.”

Audiences have come to love *Mad Men* for the women, the drinking, the fashion, the design, the drinking, the sex, the music, the drinking and, yes, the smoking – but its flirtation with death is not high on the list. Yet we learn early on that Don has taken on the identity of a dead man and in the first season he can come off like a matinee idol Camus, saying things like, “You’re born alone, you die alone and the world just drops a bunch of rules on you to make you forget those facts.” The tension between those elements – cold-eyed bleakness and the sunny sell – has propelled the series through seven mostly excellent seasons.

Confounding audience expectations would itself have been a death wish in television’s pre-*Sopranos* days, but for Weiner, who worked on that show, it’s not about giving the people what they want. “[When] I was on *The Sopranos*, people wanted to know: when’s Tony gonna whack somebody? I like action, I like tension, but I didn’t need to see somebody’s brains on the window every week.”

The *Mad Men* equivalent might be Don hitting on every woman he meets. When I tell Weiner friends have called me, disappointed, when an episode ended without Don playing the lothario, he laughs. “Like him sitting next to Neve Campbell [on a flight to LA in the season five opener] – everything about her was Don Draper catnip. Right down to her being single and a little bit depressed. And he doesn’t want to do it.”

At that point in the show’s arc, Don had already blown his first marriage, written an open letter to *The New York Times* saying the agency would no longer handle tobacco (blindsiding his partners) and run from a mature relationship with an understanding psychologist by marrying his secretary, Megan (Jessica Paré). For some view-

ers, Don marrying Megan was the equivalent of whacking Adriana in *The Sopranos*, but for Weiner the choice was obvious. “What I realised is that [men of Don’s day] don’t stay single very long. It’s said in the show, they want a steak on the table.”

That was a bad year for Don. Recalls Weiner: “I remember Jon Hamm saying to me, when he slept with the two women in one night and forgot to pick up his kids and stole a guy’s idea, ‘Please tell me this is the bottom.’ And I said, ‘Almost!’”

“He’s got a lot of alcoholic behaviour that is not related to drinking,” he says. “He starts to see the signs pointing to marrying this woman. The thrill of the impulse, that moment of reality, of being saved . . . it’s impulsiveness; it’s a really big part of his character.”

I thought the moment Don decided to marry Megan was when his daughter spilled her milkshake and Megan didn’t freak out, as her mother, Don’s ex, Betty (January Jones) would have. “And they’re all stunned,” agrees Weiner. “But guess what? She doesn’t have any kids.” He laughs. “I’m kind of on Betty’s side with that.”

Weiner has been in the habit of talking at length to principals Hamm and Elisabeth Moss, who plays Peggy Olson, on and off the set. “He used to call me at night and we’d talk for two or three hours sometimes,” Moss tells me on the phone from New York, where she is starring in a Broadway revival of Wendy Wasserstein’s *The Heidi Chronicles*. “There was stuff he shared about where things were going and where he wanted to go with it.”

The women’s stories – and not just those who sleep with Don – are a big part of *Mad Men*. Those who felt the show fetishised the Rat Pack ring-a-ding culture of male chauvinism missed the signals in the first season that the Fifties were ending and blacks, Jews, gays and women were at the gate. “She has the upbringing of the Fifties but the counterculture is sort of crashing in on her,” Moss says of her character. “Like, I don’t really feel like my mom but I don’t really feel like one of those kids living in the Village and protesting and listening to Bob Dylan . . . Another show might have shown Peggy as this sort of bra-burning radical protester but because our show doesn’t go in the normal direction – in the direction that you think, ever – Peggy just kind of dips her toe in it and leaves it to go on and become her own person. And that’s actually much more realistic.”

Becoming her own person is, in an odd way, a gift from Don. “I think they sort of start off as polar opposites,” says Moss. “I almost picture him at the top and her at the bottom. And they start moving toward each other as he goes down



**BIG GUNS:** Harry Hamlin as Jim Cutler, Kevin Rahm as Ted Chaough, Christina Hendricks as Joan Harris and Vincent Kartheiser as Pete Campbell in the previous season's last episode

and she goes up and at some point they meet in the middle . . . But Peggy becomes what Don never could become, because he's from a different generation, because he's a man, I don't know why. But she becomes more fully developed than he ever became, she becomes smarter than he ever became. And a bit more able to handle herself in ways he wasn't able to handle himself. And I think that is something that he gave her and taught her and helped her to achieve. She surpasses him and leaves him behind a little bit."

No one wants to see the hero get left behind. After Don bottomed out, in the fourth and fifth seasons, audience enthusiasm for the show seemed to cool a bit. (*The Sopranos*, too, lost viewers before its sixth and final season.) But of all the shows in this new golden era of television, *Mad Men* always seemed to know where it was going, even if its creator was scrambling to fill in his hero's biography early on. The seasons seemed like chapters, and there was a plausibility to the characters' fates: an alcoholic found AA, the eldest partner died.

Weiner's a literary guy – Don starts off living in Ossining, not exactly the garden spot of upstate New York, because John Cheever lived there, and when I tell him that I interviewed Richard Yates many years ago, not far from where we are sitting, he says of *Revolutionary Road* that: "If I had read this book, I never would have made this show" – a revealing statement perhaps, since Yates's tale of an adman's marriage ends quite tragically. Of Yates's lesser-known *Disturbing the Peace*, a novel about a writer losing his marbles in booze and his pursuit of art, he tells me: "It's like the *Mad Men* version of the New Testament to me." With his literary sensibilities, Weiner at least claims he always knew where his story was going, if not how it was going to get there.

Early on, the people at the AMC channel and Lionsgate, the producers, wanted to know more about Don. "What they said was, 'What else is

going on in the show? Who is this guy?' You don't have a Dr Melfi [Tony Soprano's shrink] and we're not going to have one because part of the story of this show is that these men don't talk to anybody, and Don's never going to see a psychiatrist." (Date one maybe.) "I was emboldened by working on *The Sopranos*; I did not want to have a formula. But when they got to second episode and there was no big pitch from Don saving the day, they were kind of disappointed."

That's when Weiner came up with the back-story of Don actually being Dick Whitman, an ex-GI who stole a dead man's identity in Korea. He cribbed it from an unfinished screenplay he had written in 1992 and presented it to the suits. "I had the best meeting I ever had in my life," he recalls. "I told them this story, which was so intricate and long and detailed, and they were like, 'Did you just make all this up?' And I didn't tell them, I didn't tell anybody for years."

Don is pushed out of his own company in season six after confessing, in a meeting with Hershey's, that his childhood was a horror and he is not who he says he was. He has to work his way back into the company he helped build, make amends to his partners and Peggy, make peace with his daughter and even his ex. "Watching him go from someone who didn't want to be a partner because he didn't want anyone to know his name, to a guy with his name on the firm, reluctant to take his name off the firm" – that journey was a tough sell to fans at times. "I wanted to show him change, which is, in itself, against the very principles of serious television."

He's not too worried about how the audience will react to the show's ending, and I doubt it will end in Don's death (though a cancer diagnosis would certainly be plausible). Though Weiner works with a large team of writers, it's still his show and Don's his guy, and both are a little less free with the sort of Existentialism 101 sentiments espoused early on. "You just stop having a confident attitude about the meaninglessness and disorder of the universe," he says. "Some of that is about having children but I do think it's also about getting older."

*Mad Men* has come this far not talking down to the audience, not explaining every action and omission, not connecting every dot. "I showed 2001 to my children because they're really into space," he recalls, "and I really thought, I'm pushing it here. My oldest son was 16 and the littlest was eight. First of all, they could not get enough of it, the monkey stuff, all of it. But when the movie ended I asked the eight-year-old, what is the ending? What does it mean? And he said, 'Well, I think he became something else'." N

COURTESY OF AMC





## INSIDE THE MOST RUNNING-OBSESSED NATION ON EARTH

Of the world's 100 fastest marathon runners, only six are not from Africa; five of those six are from Japan

**DO YOU KNOW** what “ekiden” means? If you do, you’re either a track geek or you’ve read Adharanand Finn’s engaging Japanese odyssey, *The Way of the Runner*, which drops us deep behind lines in the land of the rising sun. Japan is the most running-obsessed nation on Earth, where the sport is both corporate and spiritual. Yet the Africans always beat them in the big races. Why is that?

Journalist, author and running fanatic Finn left his Devon home for a six-month sabbatical in Japan. With his adventurous family, he went to immerse himself in the running culture of this secretive nation, where opening investigative doors is tricky for a *gaijin* – outside person. Japan, we discover, is different. You don’t answer your phone on the train, for instance; even letting it ring is a faux pas of some magnitude. Another difference is their interest in running. Of the hundred fastest marathon runners in 2013, only six did not come from Africa; and of those six, five came from Japan. Runners here are national icons and generously paid by big business; a different world from their British counterparts – anonymous figures scraping around for funding.

And at the centre of Japanese running stands one race: the Hakone ekiden. It’s a relay race

between universities in the Kanto region of Japan; a two-day affair run over 165 miles and viewed on TV by close to 30% of the population – making it possibly the most watched footrace in the world. This is why all the best high school runners want to run the Hakone, and why they choose the Hakone universities. Other universities can’t compete – literally.

Finn explores both the corporate and the spiritual aspects of running in Japan. Many athletes in the UK are lost to the sport because they simply can’t afford not to work. But in Japan, every large company has its own professional runners to represent the business in the various ekiden races. Initially, it was to give the employees something to cheer about and promote company loyalty and team ethic. (The first ekiden was run in 1917.) But now there’s also PR and advertising to consider. As Mr Ogushi of NTT, a large telecoms company, says: “A race that lasts four or five hours, or two days even, with television cameras on the runners the whole time, with the company logo . . . it’s good advertising.”

So why not simply support marathons? It’s not the same, apparently. “The only thing that really matters for company spirit is the ekiden, passing the ribbon, doing it together . . . we are all brought

**STAYING THE COURSE:** Right, breasting the winning tape at relay race the ekiden. Far right, Buddhist monk Genshin Fujinami dons a straw hat after completing 1,000 marathons, thus earning “dai-ajari” or living saint status

BY  
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THE ASAHI SHIMBUN/SHIZUO KAMBAYASHI/AP

## The two-day ekiden relay race is watched by some 30% of the population

this challenge. And it's also true that each marathon has a number of "shrine breaks", with the monk pausing for prayer at holy places along the way. The spiritual benefit of this practice lies in the constant movement, the physical demands which exhaust the mind, the ego and the body until nothing is left. "And when you are nothing," says one of the monks, "then something, pop, comes up to fill the space." And this something is the vast consciousness that lies below the surface of our lives, a sense of oneness with the universe.

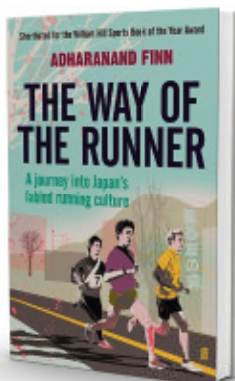
But to return to where we started: given this national obsession with running in Japan, why do the Africans always beat them in the big races? One suggestion is over-training at an early age in Japan, brought on by overbearing coaches interested only in short-term results. This leads to a high rate of injuries and burn-out later on.

Another reason may be the cultural fear of failure. Athletics coach Renato Canova says to win big races "you need to be a little wild" – but "discipline" and "caution" trump "wild" in Japan, where Finn sees only tension on the starting line. Usain Bolt pranced about before the Olympic 100m final, believing you need to be relaxed to perform well. But when Kokichi Tsuburaya came third in the 1964 Olympic marathon in Tokyo, he ended up taking his own life. He'd failed. N

together in support of the team." In Japan, it's the collective unit that matters, not the individual – "don't be the nail that sticks out," as they say.

And away from the corporates, there's the spiritual side to the sport. Haruki Murakami's book, *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, found running to be spiritual in as much as it requires tenacity, endurance and a willingness to make the mind and body do things they do not wish to do. Finn pursues this theme when he meets the running monks of Mount Hiei, who've achieved enlightenment by completing a thousand marathons in a thousand days.

There are some myths to be debunked here: the thousand days do not have to be consecutive. Indeed, seven years is the normal length for







## WHY HOLLYWOOD SAW ALTMAN AS SUCH A DANGEROUS PLAYER

The chaotic career of a revolutionarily realist director whose gambles could lose big or succeed spectacularly

IN 1964, DIRECTOR Robert Altman went on a weekend trip to Las Vegas. He walked into a bookie's shop and bet \$200 on a horse. As it happened, the horse came in first, winning Altman several thousand dollars. Years later, he confessed to his family that this had been an all-or-nothing moment; the money he staked was in fact the last bit of cash he still possessed. And as frightening as that was, it wasn't even the lowest moment of his career.

Within a decade, Altman had gone from being a Hollywood prodigy to being banned from the studio lots, pronounced unbankable by Jack Warner, the industry's mercurial don. Altman's unforgivable crime had been to instruct the actors of his Warner Brothers movie to overlap their dialogue. "This fool has told them to all talk at once," snapped the outraged studio boss. Hollywood just wasn't ready for Altman's staple realism, which involved such ideas as recording and mixing multiple layers of dialogue as well as using uncut camera movements instead of breaking up scenes into shots.

At the time, ironically, Hollywood desperately needed new input. In terms of innovation, the US movie business was dragging its feet while young European film-makers busily tested the

limits of the medium. Yet it would take another half decade and more high-stake gambles before Hollywood gave Robert Altman a second chance. "I was just trying to get the illusion of reality, but I got fired for it," he commented in an interview in which he clearly wrestled with Warner's rejection.

In moments like this, the otherwise plodding and conventional documentary *Altman* suddenly comes to life. It casually – and perhaps unintentionally – exposes the labyrinthine Hollywood system of rewards and punishments and what it means to operate in its confines. Initially, Robert Altman did everything possible to fit in. He quickly understood that, as a newcomer to Hollywood, it is not talent alone that will earn a director recognition. So Altman did what many first-time directors do: he lied about his track record. He knew that, without some films under your belt, it is next to impossible to get a movie produced. If you do not get backed, however, you can't build a track record – it's a catch-22. Luckily, Altman's first employer, a company that made promotional films, was taken in by the self-confident man from Kansas and did not look at this doctored CV too closely.

By working hard and efficiently, Altman soon

BY  
RUDOLPH HERZOG



got noticed. Alfred Hitchcock drafted him as a director for *Hitchcock Presents*, a cult series of whodunnits that ran on national television. Other assignments soon followed. Altman dutifully delivered but he secretly despised the formulaic approach of the TV industry. Driven by the vision that film should mimic life, he suggested writing shell-shocked soldiers into scripts and casting African-American actors. These seemingly unorthodox ideas quickly put him at

eos are cut in but they add little to the picture, merely proving that directors, too, can lead comfortable middle-class lives.

What also transpires is that Altman had little of the clichéd “tormented artist” in him; he comes across as an inspired craftsman, admirable not just for his talent, but for his dogged persistence. At times, his “European” way of making films tallied with the American mainstream, at others they hopelessly diverged. In a telling interview, Altman announced that he wanted to leave the United States, “... and by that I mean: actually split”.

To the end of his life, his affair with Hollywood would remain troubled, full of rows and break-ups. He publicly conceded that he and the American film industry were incompatible: “I make gloves, and they sell shoes.”

In spite of this, he clocked up more than 80 films in his life, though perhaps it’s no surprise that his most memorable film is *The Player*, a wonderfully twisted and sarcastic portrait of a studio executive. The opening of the movie made film history. For six minutes and without a single cut, the camera roams through a studio lot, picking up pieces of conversation seemingly at random. It is a sequence full of wit and caustic humour. Despite being a feature film, *The Player* might go down in history as one of the finest documentaries about Hollywood ever made, creating a magic sense of realism which Ron Mann’s *Altman* fails to match.

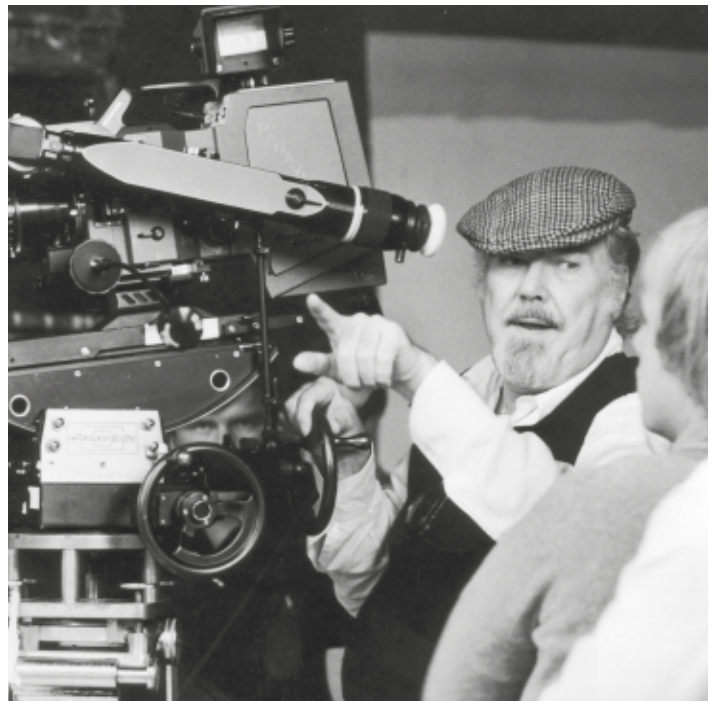
## Altman and the American film industry were incompatible: “I make gloves, they sell shoes.”

loggerheads with a business that remained stuck in a *Mad Men*-type 1950s time warp.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it was during a self-imposed exile in Canada that Altman got his big break. In 1970, he made *M\*A\*S\*H*, which poked fun at the Korean War. While this cheeky film seems dated today, it captured the spirit of a time in which Americans were rapidly getting weary of the gruesome fighting in Vietnam. Having chalked up such a major box office success, Altman duly found that all Hollywood’s doors were now being thrown open to him.

As Ron Mann’s documentary tracks the director’s topsy-turvy career, it becomes increasingly geared towards the interests of hardened film buffs and Altman aficionados. Various home vid-

**MAVERICK TALENT:** Below, Tim Robbins in *The Player*, Altman’s wonderfully twisted and sarcastic portrait of a studio executive. Below right, the director at work



ALAMY/GETTY





## HOW ANXIOUS ALF PUT HIS FEARS INTO ACTRESSES AND AUDIENCES

Hitchcock is revealed as a blunt and bawdy sado-masochist who wanted to make viewers suffer for their thrills

**ALFRED HITCHCOCK**, said director François Truffaut, was “an artist of anxiety”. Everything made him anxious: as a baby he was terrified by an aunt who put her face up against his and made cooing noises; in Hollywood he refused to cross the studio floor in case a stranger tried to speak to him. He suffered from vertigo, he was scared of sex, he had been morbidly afraid of the police ever since his father, to punish him for a childhood misdemeanour, had him locked up for three minutes in a police cell. The reason he fell asleep during dinner parties, Peter Ackroyd speculates in this nifty little book, is because he alleviated his anxieties with opiates.

When he was asked by a critic to explain the “deep logic” of his movies, Hitchcock – who considered such questions pretentious – replied that it was “to make people suffer”. And suffer they did. The 45-second shower scene in *Psycho* had audiences running up and down the aisles; the director Peter Bogdanovich left the cinema feeling that he “been raped or something”. So deafening was the screaming in the auditorium that no one heard the famous soundtrack of hysterical violins.

Hitchcock also liked his stars to suffer, keeping them on edge during the shoot in order to catch

their tension on celluloid. While he was filming *Psycho*, he hid the body of Bates’s mother in Janet Leigh’s dressing room so he could measure the quality of her scream when the thing was discovered. “He relished scaring me,” said Leigh. While he was filming *The Birds* he allowed a raven to attack Tippi Hedren’s face; she narrowly avoided losing an eye.

Ackroyd’s Hitchcock is as packed with anecdotes as an after-dinner speech. Everyone, it seems, had a story about Hitch, most of them ghoulish. David O Selznick, with whom he collaborated on *Rebecca*, described him as “not exactly a man to go camping with”. It was the kind of dry comment Hitchcock enjoyed: nothing amused him so much, he said, “as understatement”. He looked for it in his actors as well, instructing Barbara Bel Geddes, in the soft, controlled voice of a hypnotist, not to act, and Kim Novak to get rid of her facial expressions. When Gregory Peck asked what his character was supposed to be thinking, Hitch replied: “My dear boy, I couldn’t care less what you’re thinking. Just let your face drain of all expression.” Someone else was instructed to smile as if she had a mouthful of broken china.

He was born of Irish Catholic stock in 1899, in the East End of London, where his father ran two

BY  
**FRANCES WILSON**



**FOOD AND LOATHING:** Alfred Hitchcock instructing Kim Novak on the set of *Vertigo* in 1958, above, and eating a pretzel at the premiere of *Psycho* in 1960, above right



fishmonger shops on a street called Salmon Lane; the cartoonish quality of his background would not have been lost on him. Hitchcock had a strong comic streak. As round and English as a cheddar cheese – “I have always been uncommonly unattractive,” he conceded – he would have been at ease in one of the raucous Rowlandson sketches he hung on the walls of his Hollywood home. For all his ice-cool blondes, it was bawd that he liked best; what he most admired about Grace Kelly was her hoard of dirty jokes.

He met his wife Alma Reville in the early 1920s, at Paramount’s Famous Players-Lasky Studio in London. Alma was a cutter and Hitch was doing a medley of things, including screenwriting and assistant-directing. He proposed during a storm at sea; too sick to lift her head from the pillow, Alma apparently burped her acceptance. The burp, notes Ackroyd, said it all. They somehow produced a child called Patricia (Hitchcock claimed to have inseminated his wife with a fountain-pen), after which the relationship became purely professional.

Alma had an instinctive understanding of film, and Hitch deferred to her in everything. They were, by any standard, an odd couple: she went around in jacket-and-trouser ensembles, which he had specially tailored by Austin Reed, while he equipped himself with a uniform of six suits (dark blue), six pairs of shoes, 10 identical ties and 15 identical pairs of socks and underwear. She was as nimble as a schoolboy, and he moved his huge body with feline grace; he would have become a “poof”, he joked, had he not met Alma.

Ackroyd goes no further than Hitchcock’s other

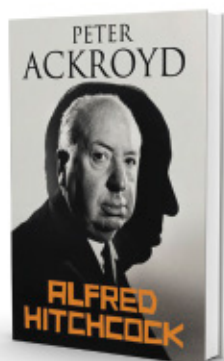
biographers in trying to make sense of his sexuality. A sado-masochist, a voyeur, a homosexual, a fetishist, Hitch ticks all the boxes but still eludes categorisation. His obsession with Tippi Hedren verged on the criminal; so terrorised was she by his attentions that even Alma was forced to apologise to the poor actress. He filmed, said Truffaut, love scenes as if they were murder scenes and murder scenes as if they were love scenes. In *Strangers on a Train*, Ackroyd observes, the murderer falls into a romantic swoon as he strangles the old lady.

Having made 24 films in 13 years in England, including *The Lady Vanishes* and *Jamaica Inn*, Hitch and Alma left for Hollywood in 1939. “I am itching to get my hands on those American stars,” he said, but it was Ingrid Bergman who had most impact on him.

The real star of his films, however, was Hitchcock himself, whose direction of Bergman reduced her to tears for the only time in her career. “How I suffer and loathe every moment on the set,” she said during the filming of *Spellbound*. “Ingrid, it’s only a movie,” Hitchcock would retort by way of calming her down. It became his catchphrase. He hated the language of film criticism which evolved with the century; when Hitchcock helped his granddaughter with an essay she was writing on *Shadow of a Doubt*, his favourite of all his films, she only got a C grade. “That’s the best I can do,” he shrugged.

He died in Bel Air in 1980, the year that a nervy young blonde called Diana Spencer became engaged to the Prince of Wales. Now there’s a story Hitch would have enjoyed.

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## 11 April 1936 • The lion of Judah scurries

**S**ix months ago, Fascist soldiers crossed the Mareb River. This surprised no one. For weeks, Mussolini had threatened to invade Ethiopia.

Haile Selassie cried Help! to the League of Nations – which in 1923 had admitted slave-trading Ethiopia only at the behest of Italy. And before the League of Nations, Anthony Eden, extraordinary young man of British politics, demanded drastic action against the aggressor.

After weeks of comic and avaricious bickering, most of the league's 51 members launched the first bloodless world war – economic sanctions went into effect. So did the greatest bluff-tussle in modern history. Britain rushed her mighty fleets into the Mediterranean.

Sanctions pinched the Italian housewife but not her gun-or-shovel-toting husband in Ethiopia: The Fascist conquest of the Last Black Empire went steadily, if not too merrily, on” N





# HELP SAVE THE 'WOW'

These giants of the animal kingdom need help. Despite their strength and cunning they're no match for a poacher's rifle. For 50 years WWF has been securing protected areas worldwide, but these aren't enough to stop the killing. To disrupt the sophisticated criminal gangs supplying animal parts to lucrative illegal markets, we are working with governments to toughen law enforcement. We're also working with consumers to reduce the demand for unlawful wildlife products. Help us look after the world where you live at [panda.org/50](http://panda.org/50)



Silverback Western lowland gorilla.

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